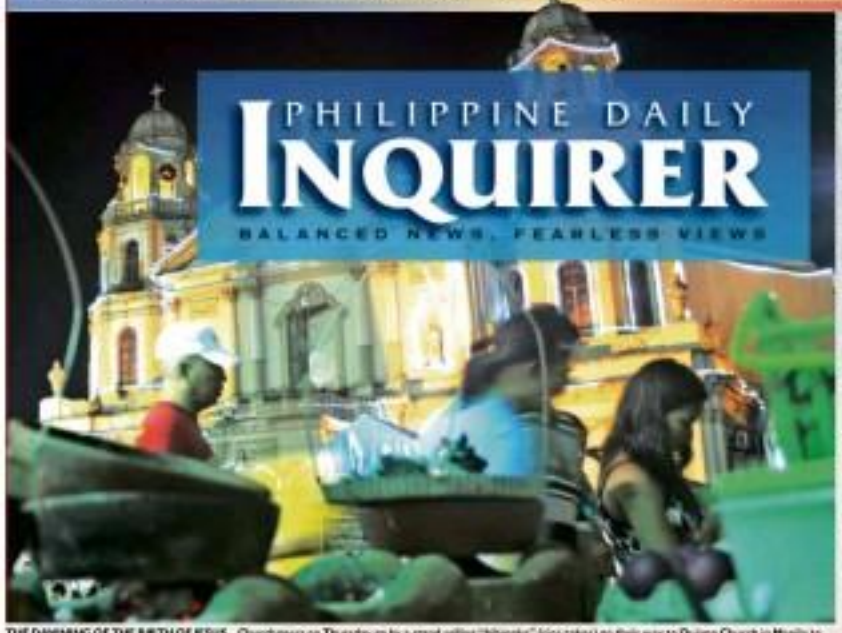
Friday, December 17, 2010 ★★ 28 sections / Vol. 26 / No. 9 P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Text INQ ON ORGANIZING to 4467

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



THE DAWNING OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS Churchgoers on Thursday go by a stand selling "bibingka" (rice cakes) on their way to Quiapo Church in Manila to hear the first of the nine-day "Simbang Gabi" Masses leading to Christmas Day, the birthday of the Lord Jesus.

Facebook founder crowned Time's 'Person of the Year'

NEW YORK—Facebook cofounder Mark Zuckerberg on Wednesday beat WikiLeaks chief Julian Assange to be crowned Time magazine's "Person of the Year"—even though the weekly magazine's own reader's thought it should be the other way around.

Before 2010, Zuckerberg, the 26-year-old CEO of Facebook, was primarily known as a mysterious, sweatshirt-

FACEBOOK A11

FACEBOOK MOGUL Mark Zuckerberg, 26, founder of the social networking site that has more than half a billion users, has changed the lives of all people.

Year of Rat seen lucky for P-Noy in love dep't

By Rica T. Olchondra

THE CORRIDO just will prove to be a lucky year for President Aquino, especially in the romance department.

"The President is a rat," feng shui expert

MAIN A11

SC junks suit vs Mikey A

Says no jurisdiction to rule on qualifications of GMA son to represent security guards

By Nikko Dizon

THE SUPREME Court has remanded the petitions filed against Ang Galing Pinoy (AGP) Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo to the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET), saying that it no longer has jurisdiction over the complaints against him.

A party-list group, AGP represents security guards and tricycle drivers.

In a unanimous decision promulgated on Dec. 7, the high court said Arroyo was already a member of the House of Representatives and thus the HRET has jurisdiction over him.

The magistrates noted that there were two petitions against Arroyo, oldest son of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, before the HRET.

"It is not disputed that Arroyo, as AGP's first nominee, has already been proclaimed

SC RULING A10

FANCY MEETING YOU HERE "Lolo" Arroyo-Bernas, daughter of ex-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's lawyer-brother Jesus Arroyo, and President Aquino give her a warm welcome before presenting her a new P 200 bill with the image of her grandfather, President Diosdado Macapagal. (See story on Page A2.)

GERARD ALVAREZ

Late Sports

Brave Filipino booters bow to Indonesians

WATCH LIVEcast (Hong Kong Stadium, Jakarta, 7 p.m.—Indonesia vs Philippines)

By Cedelff Tupas

JAKARTA—There was no repeat to that beating here eight years ago. Sadly, though, there was no victory either for the Philippine football team.

Falling behind early, the Filipinos failed to replicate their second-half heroics that have become their trademark in this tournament and bowed to the Indonesians, 0-1, Thursday

SPORTS A6

Season of joy starts with gov't-NPA truce

By Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

AS FILIPINO Catholics trooped to churches yesterday to start the traditional Simbang Gabi (dawn Masses), government forces and communist rebels began a 19-day holiday ceasefire that had been shattered by the guerrillas' deadliest attack in a year.

The ceasefire coincided with the start of the nine-day Simbang Gabi or Misa de Gallo (literally, "Mass of the Rooster"), a tradition unique to the Philippines.

It marks the start of the observance of the Christmas sea-

SEASON A10

TELLING THE FILIPINO STORY TO THE WORLD

Editors' Note: For 25 days, we will be telling stories about the Inquirer to mark the paper's 25th anniversary on Dec. 8, 2010. Some are links inside stories but requesting on how we cover unfolding events; some are mark the day stories that become talk-of-the-town types; others are turning point stories that have changed the landscape of history, still others, big or small, seize the heart and never let go.

But whatever, the Inquirer will tell you the story.

Supreme irony of the Cory years

By Fe Zamora
Executive Producer, Radyo Inquirer

CRAZY AS IT may seem, but this was how I looked like on the night of Nov. 30, 1989.

Men, women and children were scrambling to get out of embattled Camp Aguinaldo

for "safer" ground as yet another coup attempt against President Corazon Aquino got under way.

I was trying my best to get inside the camp which would, hours later, turn into a battleground.

The coup lasted merely 10 days, with forces converging between the rebel troops and the Aquino soldiers.

The government eventually gained control after US Air Force fighter jets flew to rebel "persuasion flights" over Metro Manila, driving away the rebel

SUPREME A11

Edsa baby covers dying Lady in Yellow

By Nika Calleja

"CORY IS DEAD," said a caller who roused me before dawn that Saturday. I just had two hours of sleep then, after keeping watch at Makati Medical Center.

Along with Metro reporter Allison Lopez, I was assigned to keep a vigil at the hospital during the day and at night as-

EDSA A10

FOND FAREWELL The nation turned out to bid goodbye to democracy icon Cory Aquino on her funeral on Aug. 5, 2009.

SC focused on Alfaro testimony

By Nikko Dizon and Cathy C. Yamsuan

"FALSUS in uno, falsus in omnibus."

This legal maxim—"falsity in one is falsity in all"—explains why the Supreme Court decision acquitting Hubert Webb of the 1991 Vizconde massacre no longer dwelled on the evidence against the six other accused and focused only on the testimony of star witness Jessica Alfaro against the principal suspect, according to the high court's spokesperson and administrator Jose Midas Marquez.

"If you will notice, the decision did not touch very much on the conviction of Webb. The theory of the prosecution is mainly anchored on the testimony of Alfaro," Marquez said yesterday at a press briefing.

Marquez reiterated that the majority of the justices had found Alfaro's testimony "inconsistent and unreliable," and that are the failure of the prosecution to prove the guilt of

SC RULING A10

DNA testing needed to ID TV man's body

By Julie M. Aurelio and Philip C. Tubeza

THE BODY of a reporter who was among the victims in the November 2009 Maguindanao massacre was so badly mangled that DNA testing had to be conducted to confirm his identity, a medico-legal expert said yesterday.

At the continuation of his testimony on the autopsy of 52 of the victims, Chief Insp. Dean Cabrera said two families had initially claimed what turned out to be the body of UNTV reporter Victor Nuñez.

Cabrera said the two families agreed to his suggestion that the body be subjected to DNA testing.

"Three days later, [it was]

DNA TESTING A11

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers

Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy

SWERTRES

11 AM	2	0	8
4 PM	8	2	7
9 PM	3	4	1

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LOTTO DRAW ON LOTTO, results by SMS: PCSO

Ex-general pleads guilty

Plea bargain to beat plunder raps seen

By TJ Burgonio

IN AN INDICATION that a plea bargain is in the offing, a former military comptroller accused of amassing more than P300 million in ill-gotten assets yesterday pleaded guilty to two lesser offenses at the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court yesterday.

Retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia entered guilty pleas to direct bribery and violation of Section 4.b of the Anti-Money Laundering Act (Amla) at the anti-graft court's 2nd Division.

The prosecutors did not oppose the guilty pleas, an indication that it could be part of a plea bargain, according to a Sandiganbayan staffer who asked not to be identified.

Out of prison

If the pleas are accepted by the court, the two lesser cases will substitute for the two major cases against Garcia—plunder and violation of of Sec. 4.a of the Amla—that had been scheduled for promulgation yesterday, the source said.

Garcia could even walk out of prison anytime because the two lesser offenses are bailable, the source said.

State prosecutors and Garcia's lawyer, Cayetano de Jesus, avoided the media and refused to be interviewed after the hearing.

The guilty pleas to the two lesser offenses came on the heels of news reports a few days ago that Garcia had executed deeds of conveyance for the transfer of some of his assets in favor of the government.

P183-M plunder

The speculation was that a compromise deal was being worked out by the government with Garcia and the members of his family who are his co-defendants.

Garcia was charged with plunder in April 2005 along with wife Clarita, and sons Jan Carl and Timothy Mark, and with violation of Sec. 4-A of Amla when his wife, two sons and a third son, Juan Carlo, in December 2009.

The retired general was accused of amassing funds, landholdings and properties totaling P183 million, an amount disproportionate to his family's income of P3.27 million as of December 2004.

During his arraignment, Garcia had pleaded not guilty to the charges of plunder and violation of Section 4.a of Amla.

Plunder is a capital offense punishable by reclusion perpetua. Direct bribery can also carry life years and one day to 40 years under the Revised Penal Code.

Section 4.A of Amla refers to direct transactions of laundered money and punishable by seven to 14 years imprisonment and a fine of P3 million to P7 million.

Sec. 4-B refers to the act of allowing such a transaction to happen, and is penalized by four to seven years in prison and a fine of P1.5 million to P3 million, according to a lawyer.

GARCIA

Assets in US

Investigators discovered that Garcia and his wife had fraudulent $500,000 to the United States in seven transfers from November 1995 to January 2004.

Several pieces of property worth P47 million were also found registered in their names, on top of two condominium units in New York and a residence in Ohio with a fair market value of $1.42 million, according to reports.

In addition, 11 Forex bank accounts of the family were found to contain deposits of over P11.07 million.

Jan Carl and Timothy Mark were arrested by the US Customs and Border Patrol officials on Dec. 19, 2003 for trying to smuggle in $100,000 through the San Francisco International Airport.

Garcia's wife was arrested in Michigan in March 2005 because of an extradition case.

A first: Parents, child on the same bank note

BULGARIA'S with the new P500 bill that bears the images of his late parents alongside his signature, President Aquino could only marvel at how "unprecedented" it all was.

"The last time (I checked on other banknotes on the world had both parents and child on the same bill," Mr. Aquino said yesterday at the launch of the new generation of Philippine banknotes in Malacañang.

The new P500 bill had the smiling faces of his mother, President Corazon C. Aquino, and below the mustached late Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. to the left of his signature as President.

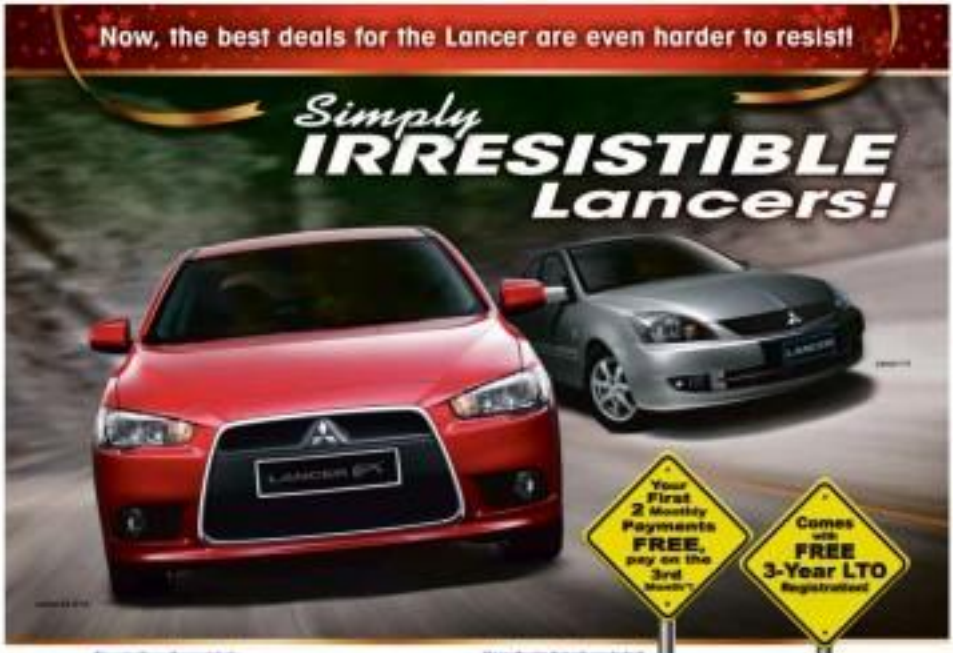
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando Tetangco said the new P500 bill "makes history for having on the same banknote both parents with their son's signature."

The P500 bill was among the six new generation bank notes presented by the BSP at the Palace.

Evangeline "Lali" Arroyo-Bersan organized the ceremony, telling reporters she was there for her grandfather and mother, former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, whose image, albeit a small one, was added to the P200 bill.

Carmen Rafael rules Bersan and the rest and drink lunch with Mr. Aquino.

Christine O. Avendaño



Christmas bonus before Christmas

By Bernard M. Dumlao

PUBLIC school teachers will receive their Christmas bonus on time this year as the Department of Budget and Management has released a total of P13.57 billion to finance that also cover employees of national agencies.

Budget Secretary Francis G. Abad said yesterday P5.57 billion has been disbursed for the Department of Education's performance enhancement incentive (PEI), which some 507,000 teachers, principals and non-teaching employees will get. They will receive P11,000 each.

Abad added that by today, the DBM would have fully released the total P8 billion national government counterpart to the PEI for 1.46 million national government employees.

"This time around, our teachers will receive their PEI within the holiday season unlike in the past when they received it late, like sometime before summer," he said.

He explained that of the total P5.57 billion released by Dep'Ed, P3.09 billion comes from the national government's savings and P1.67 billion comes from department's savings.

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American wanted for incest deported

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU of Immigration (BI) yesterday said it had deported a suspected American pedophile wanted for incest by federal authorities in Tennessee.

Immigration officer-in-charge Rosalila Ledesma, in a statement, identified the fugitive as Earl Raymond Hansen, 62, who was sent back to the United States on Dec. 8 via a Philippine Airlines flight to Los Angeles.

Ledesma said Hansen was deported following his arrest on Dec. 3 by operatives of the BI-Interpol unit in his rented apartment in Lingayen City, Mountain Province.

The operatives were tasked with a deportation warrant signed by Ledesma, who ordered the American's arrest pursuant to a mandatory deportation order issued by the immigration board of commissioners.

Ledesma said Hansen was deported for being an undocumented alien after the cancellation of his passport by the US State Department.

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Makati judge defers Trillanes ruling anew

By Tina G. Santos

A MAKATI judge yesterday deferred anew the promulgation of the coup d'etat case against ex-Navy lieutenant and detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and other soldiers charged with participation in several failed coup against the former government.

Judge Oscar Pimentel said he was just passing unwavering his verdict on the case in deference to President Aquino's decision to grant amnesty to the accused putschists.

"Despite all our efforts, we have to bow our heads to the wisdom or graciousness of the President in granting those people amnesty. That's a power we can't take away from him. That is his prerogative. We don't have anything to say about it, so the court defers the promulgation," Pimentel said.

TRILLANES

Second time

It was the second time that the judge has put off the promulgation to give way to Mr. Aquino's Proclamation 50, issued last December.

Last October, Pimentel deferred ruling on the case to give Congress sufficient time to convene and vote on whether to affirm or reject the amnesty proclamation.

Majority of the members of Congress have already concurred with the amnesty proclamation.

Pimentel ordered the soldiers' lawyers to manifest within 10 days before the court who among of their clients would avail of the amnesty.

"I believe he [Pimentel] will say that as a basis whether or not to proceed with the promulgation of the decision. But whatever his decision may be, it will be rendered moot and academic because the amnesty proclamation takes precedence," said Trillanes' lawyer, Reynaldo Robles.

According to Robles, the promulgation of the judge's ruling would push through only if some of the accused decide not to avail of the amnesty.

Illogical to proceed

"If all of the accused avail of the amnesty, it is illogical to proceed with the promulgation because amnesty erases the offense," he said.

Majority of the accused attended the hearing yesterday including Trillanes and Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, who early yesterday declared after eluding arrest for more than two years.

Pimentel acted on the motion to defer the promulgation filed on Tuesday by Robles, who is also the lawyer for accused former Navy and Marine officers, James Layug and Gary Alejano.

Samsung into marketing, not recruitment

By Paola G. Manosdio

THE LOCAL unit of South Korean electronics giant Samsung has denied reports that the company was engaged in syndicated and large scale illegal recruitment of employees, which has led to the banning of some of the firm's top officials from leaving the country.

In a statement, Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. Depot, a division of Samsung Electronics, said it was merely engaged in the marketing and distribution of Samsung brand electronic products and had nothing to do with recruitment.

A hold departure order was issued by the Bureau of Immigration (BI) against Korean nationals Kyung Chul Park, Seem Hee Koe and Hae Lyung Ryu. Another 13 Filipino officials of the Korean firm who are subjects of pending lawsuits were also included in the immigration watch list.

The officials are facing charges of syndicated and large scale illegal recruitment involving economic sabotage, estafa (Fund) and theft filed by manpower agency Sonpo & Stadtlaender Inc. (TSI). The charges stemmed from the alleged "piracy" of 700 of TSI's employees by Sepco.

Sepco insisted that "it is not in the business of manpower recruitment of promo-merchandisers who are assigned to sell Samsung products to consumers as support to accredited Samsung dealers nationwide."

"Sepco contracts third-party manpower agencies to supply the promo-merchandisers, which clearly constitutes no employer-employee relationship between Sepco and the promo-merchandisers," it added.

At present, the company said it had been employing the services of five Filipino-owned manpower agencies to meet its requirements.

"The contracts between TSI and its promo-merchandisers is co-terminous with TSI's contract with Sepco. As early as June 13, 2010, TSI served termination notices to their promo-merchandisers effective June 30, 2010," the company said.

Brave Filipino booters bow to Indonesians

From page A1

sight in the first leg of the semifinals of the Asean Football Federation Suzuki Cup before 70,000 fans at Bung Karno Stadium here.

Cristian Gonzales, the ball-strong Singaporean striker naturalized by the Indonesians for the tournament, pounced on the confusion in the Philippines defense and created a lingering header in the 34th minute that proved to be the marginal goal in a match that offered few chances.

Indonesia had humiliated the Philippines, 13-1, in their previous meeting in the same tournament in 2002, but the vastly improved Filipinos proved to be no pushovers this time.

Phil and James Younghusband both came close to scoring early in the first half, but the Indonesians defended doggedly to secure the victory before a sea of red-clad supporters, who showed little appreciation for the Filipinos.

The Philippines will travel to win by two goals in the second leg of the semifinals on Sunday at the same venue to advance to the finals.

Bound coach Simon McMenemy made no change in the starting eleven that stunned Vietnam, 3-1, and battled Myanmar to a scoreless draw in the group stage to Hanoi.

But the Filipinos hardly managed to carve out a clear chance until Phil Younghusband's 23rd-yard effort heavily diving save from Indonesian keeper Markus Sihaloho.

Younghusband, with his pace and trickery, caused all sorts of problems for the Indonesians. He found space to shoot after a brilliant run, but his swerving shot was again denied by Sihaloho in the 33rd minute.

Corrections

IN THE DEC. 3 ISSUE, a story on Page A10—"Webb files contempt case vs NBI officials"—mistakenly identified NBI Deputy Director Reynaldo Esmeralda as among the respondents named in Hubert Webb's petition to cite in contempt the alleged coaching of eyewitness Jessica Alfaro. Esmeralda was a respondent in the petition for the loss of Webb's alleged screen capsule...not for the coaching of Alfaro.

* * *

IN THE DEC. 10 ISSUE, a front-page story—"CHR seeks immediate release of Hostage 637"—mistakenly identified the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as among the groups calling for the immediate freedom of the Hostage 63. While the ICRC visits people in relation to armed conflict to ensure their humane treatment, it never seeks the release of detainees.

* * *

IN THE DEC. 10 ISSUE, a News story on Page A23—"Going off 9-school bid: Ates pays it forward"—misspelled the surname of a college instructor. The instructor's name is Arleen Capilar—not Capiles. The same error appeared in two photo captions on Pages A23 and A24.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors, in writing, to the Post Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 700 Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Marconi Street, Makati City; fax this to 896-6041; e-mail to address: postdesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to the Publisher's e-mail address: inquirer@inquirer.com.ph or fax this also to 896-6041 local 280. The Publisher's telephone number is 897-0808 local 280.

The Daily Gospel

Friday, December 17, 2010
2nd Week of Advent
1st Reading: Gen 49:2, 8-10
Gospel: Mt 1:1-17

This is the account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac; Isaac the father of Jacob; Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (their mother was Tamar); Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron of Aram; Aram was the father of Aminadab; Aminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon;

Salmon was the father of Boaz (his mother was Rahab); Boaz was the father of Obed, his mother was Ruth; Obed was the father of Jesse.

Jesse was the father of David, the king. David was the father of Solomon, his mother had been Uriah's wife;

Solomon was the father of Rehoboam; Then came the kings: Abijah, Asaph, Jehoshaphat, Joram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah.

And when the time of the Israelite exile has been at the time of the deportation to Babylon:

After the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Zerubbabel and Zerubbabel of Abiud.

Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, and Eliakim of Azor; Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, and Akim the father of Elihud; Elihud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, and Matthan of Jacob.

Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and it is of her that Jesus who is called the Christ — the Messiah.

There were then 14 generations in all from Abraham to David, and 14 generations from David to the deportation to Babylon, and 14 generations from the deportation to Babylon to the birth of Christ.

Commentary:

"Who is the Son of the ancestors of Christ..."

Jesus, it is clear, is the fulfillment of the Israelite historical history.

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Bus hostages' kin to get cash, Lim tells HK chief exec

By Jerry E. Esplanada

GLUCOSE, CHOLESTEROL, URIC ACID MULTI METER
www.fareastmed.net

THE PHILIPPINES will help the families hurt by the hostage-taking of Hong Kong tourists in Manila and the eight of those were killed, Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim said on Thursday in a return to the Chinese territory.

Lim said the final position of the aid would be in cash and a second could come in the form of refurbishing or upgrading the Manila Ocean Park, one of the "token of solidarity" even being discussed with the families.

Eight Hong Kong residents were killed, seven people were wounded and nine were released safely early in the hour-long ordeal perpetrated by a rogue ex-Manila policeman.

Lim spoke after Ambassador Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang to update him on the actions taken by the Philippine government since the Aug. 23 incident.

The between Manila and Hong Kong became strained, residents of the territory – Chinese territory expressed shock and thousands of tourists cancelled bookings to the Philippines after the 11-hour hostage drama that played out live on television.

The Philippine executive to Hong Kong quoted Lim as saying, "Instead of the Philippines' tourism department, it is my responsibility to help ensure that the concern has a conducive and safe environment for foreign visitors."

"We have undertaken steps in order that the security of local and foreign tourists will be never inadvertently compromised and that such a tragedy will not happen again," he added.

Lim referred to the creation of the Inter-Agency Council on Anti-Illegal Drugs-Task Force Against Crime Syndicates and Transnational Crime (IACAD-TFACTC) and the Philippine National Police.

The proposition has "led to the deployment of tourist police in our country's major tourist destination," he said.

For his part, Tsang said he was "grateful" for Lim's visit. With reports from AP

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NBI files new estafa charge vs Delfin Lee

By Nikko Dizon

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has filed with the justice department new syndicated estafa complaints against Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. president Delfin Lee and eight others for alleged violations of the Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF) and three homeowners at the Seven Oceans in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Recommended for prosecution, apart from Lee, were his purported spouse Josefa Chan; ex-Expan employees of Globe Asiatique in Antoni Mabalacat; Jacqueline Gamboa, Welma Mesa, Ma. Theresa Hizon, Dodie Joy Ayroso and Honorio Rose Hingpit; employees of Seven Homes; and lawyer Alex Alvarez, a manager at the foreclosure department of the HDMF, also known as Pag-IBIG Fund.

Named complainants were HDMF and Seven Homeowners Evelyn Nieves, Ronald Gabriel San Nicolas, and Catherine Pacwa who all bought houses at the subdivision between September 2009 to August 2010.

The NBI said the complainants filed the separate complaints for estafa because "they have no titles to protect their rights, they could not refund their money from Globe Asiatique, and worse, they could be subjected to HDMF auctions to their damage and prejudice as a result of double sale/fraud committed by Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. and its owners and employees."

The NBI's investigation showed that Nieves paid P1.3 million for two units at Seven Homes but Globe Asiatique failed to deliver the property title even after a year of receiving her payments.

Moreover, Nieves was able to verify with Pag-Ibig that the units that she had bought were covered by loans under the names of Carlo Espinosa and Lerma Villaflores.

Investigations also revealed that Pag-Ibig member who took out a loan through Globe Asiatique while Villaflores said she was unaware how her application had reached the HDMF.

Bacani bought his unit and an extra lot in Seven Homes for P1.2 million. Globe Asiatique also failed to deliver his title, forcing him to pay for the property that had been covered by a loan under the name of Emily Bacullion. With Jerry E. Esplanada

Court seen to free 'Morong 43' today

By Kristine L. Alave

THE 43 HEROES claiming to be health workers but accused by the military of being communist rebels are expected to be released today after being detained for more than 10 months, according to Edre Olalia, lawyer of the group known as "Morong 43."

Olalia said that the Morong court hearing the charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives against the Morong 43 would issue a resolution granting the group's petition for bail this week.

The resolution will be an offshoot of the motion to withdraw the information filed by the government early this month in accordance with President Aquino's directive of Dec. 10.

"We expect them to be released today. We were told by court officials that a resolution will be issued today," Olalia said.

The military arrested the 43 in a farmhouse in Morong, Bataan on Feb. 6. The Armed Forces of the Philippines accused them of being members of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The military claimed being rebels and said the firearms and explosives seized were planted.

After the Morong regional trial court initially issued the resolution, Malacañang said, the courts' sheriff would present the release order to the wardens of Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, where 39 of the 43 are held.

The other five detainees are under military custody in Camp Cayetano, Taguig.

Malacañang said the detainees should be returned home to their families before Christmas. He said that there was no reason for the regional trial court to delay the resolution of the case as the Provincial Board ordered the release of the Morong 43.

Mr. Aquino issued his directive on International Human Rights Day, which was at the time the eighth day of the detainees' hunger strike to plead to win their freedom.

Glorietta blast prober missing

By Alexis Papa

THE ARMY explosives investigator who claimed that the 2007 Glorietta 2 explosion was caused by a bomb and not methane has gone missing.

Retired Col. Allan Sollano has not communicated with his lawyers since Nov. 27, according to one of them, Jun Cicolo.

Cicolo told the Inquirer Sollano also had not called his wife since Mon. 29. She had hoped to hear from him by Dec. 13, her birthday, but the officer has not called.

"Up to now we don't know where he is. We hope he is OK. We don't think something bad happened to him. He is entitled labor his security). But it is unfortunate of him not to convey us," Cicolo said.

In an exclusive interview with the Inquirer on Dec. 6, Sollano called for a reinvestigation of the Glorietta 2 explosion.

No methane

He said he was convinced the blast was not caused by a buildup of methane in the mall's basement, as claimed by police and military officials, but by a planted bomb.

Since that time, Sollano had taken precautions and had not gone home. He had heard that a military 6x6 truck filled with soldiers and two police cars had gone to his home in Nueva Ecija looking for him.

Cicolo said he last saw Sollano on Nov. 27 when they were preparing his supplementary affidavit to be filed in the Department of Justice (DOJ), which was opposed a reinvestigation of the blast based on his claim.

On Nov. 29, Sollano's wife received a text message from him saying that he thought he was being followed and asking his family to take care.

No show

Sollano did not show up at a Dec. 10 hearing at the DOJ. He has not contacted his lawyers or wife since.

Cicolo said that yet, as in his disappearance, Sollano was "worried, depressed and sad at being portrayed as a liar."

The lawyer said his client had also repeatedly expressed concern for his family's safety.

"He would like him or come out just to know he is safe," Cicolo said.

The lawyers got in touch with Sollano's wife but she refused to press on interview. She also asked that her name not be published. But she sent a message saying she was hoping that her husband was alive.

Sollano was the leader of an explosives and ordnance team from the Philippine Army that was one of the first groups to respond to the Glorietta 2 blast.

He told the Inquirer in his initial impression of the blast scene was that it was caused by a powerful bomb.

Looking around, he said he found a plastic bag that was ionized and found in contains the components RDX, which is used in the manufacture of the explosive C4, commonly used by the military.

The blast left 11 people dead and around 100 injured.

Edsa baby covers dying Lady in Yellow

From page A1

al midnight he vote was weeks.

The Inquirer had mounted a makeshift for the beloved former President Corazon Aquino who had been confined for more than a month due to a worsening case of colon cancer.

Back then, I was an editorial production assistant on layout for a reporter post. The desk would always ask me to extend my shift for a few more hours, and I would often agree. It's Cory, anyway.

Stats or shine, reporters would sit on monobloc chairs outside, in an area designated for them to watch out for news from government officials or a member of the Aquino family coming in and out.

"How's The Cory?" was a question we always posted.

As one point, reporters began calling themselves members of Makati Med Press Corps. The line, I guess, became a favorite hangout.

When security tightened, Al least and I had to resort to the media door where Cory's mom was and pretend to be relatives of the patient.

We wrote details like the eerie silence on the corridor leading to the former President's room, the fine medical minds of the doctors and the precondition existing Tita Cory.

What I enjoyed most was seeing the former President's daughter Kris Aquino out lively. James romping around with his nanny.

Stakeout ends

But soon after, Makati Med officials found us out. I was escorted out by a security guard twice.

On Aug. 1, 2009, the stakeout ended.

We'd about Cory's passing, however, at around 2:39 a.m. was not yet confirmed.

Photographer Mike Jesus Orbeta, on the phone, used the word "dear" (allegedly), but I could swear it was the end. Incoming to him, TV crew and photographers saw TV host Boy Abunda, a friend of the Aquinos, rush to the hospital. A driver told them, "Wala na raw si Tita Cory." She's no longer there.

In my haste, I picked a loose T-shirt and faded jeans from my closet and hurried to hail a cab.

I was already at Makati Med when other reporters started to arrive one by one.

We waited for the announcement. Around 3 a.m., Boy Abunda and Cory's son, now President Aquino, came out with a statement. She died of cardiac arrest at 3:18 a.m. The news spread like wildfire.

Room 920

Two hours later, security beefed after media people left to follow Cory's body to Heritage Park in San Fernando, Tarpaq City.

I went up to Makati Med's ninth floor and lowered along the hallway to Cory's room 920. It was empty, except for employees tidying it up for another patient.

It was a 60-square-meter room and I'd estimate the price per reservation—a suite, air-conditioned, flat-screen TV and refrigerator. At that hour, I felt so strange. Dad goes bumps and the urge to cry.

I wrote a story about how people the hospital room of the former President.

The story just dawned on me.

The Lady in Yellow died when I was just starting my job as a reporter. I was an Edsa baby, born roughly three weeks before the Edsa1 Revolution that she led. And I grew up with Tita Cory as the President.

And, it was ironic that 21 years later, my first important assignment would be to write about her death.

My story came out the following day and ended with "but one was ever." But to me, it had just begun.

A PICE FROM THE YELLOW ALBUM The reluctant and unlikely presidential candidate, plain housewife Cory Aquino speaks to the media during the 1986 presidential campaign against President Marcos.

'Perfect' solons get pens

By TJ Burgonio

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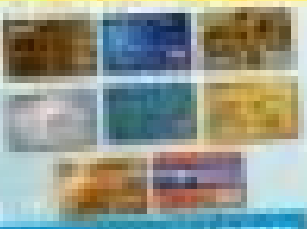

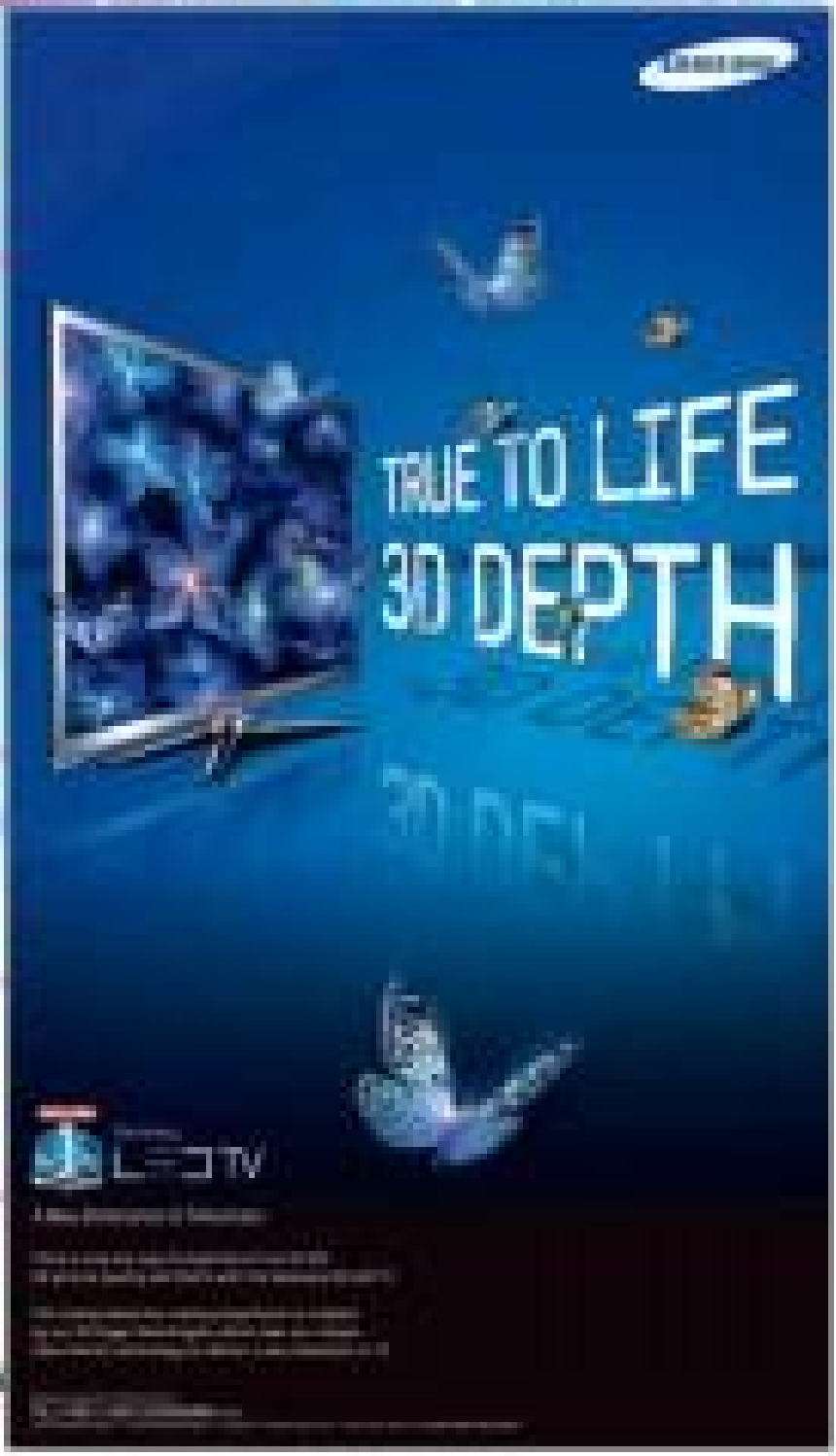

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

But for Santa

EDITORIAL

BARRING ANY unforeseen hitches, the Aquino administration may be able to do what the previous administration never managed to do: start the year with a new budget in place. After both houses of Congress ratified the final version of the bill earlier this week, Malacañang announced that President Aquino might sign the General Appropriations Act for 2011 before Christmas Day. When that happens, it will break an 11-year stretch when the government operated on a reenacted budget for most of the first quarter of the year and eliminate many anomalous practices attending it.

In the previous administration, delays in the approval of the budget bill seemed to have happened more by design than by force of circumstances. The last budgets of the Arroyo administration, for instance, was ratified by the House of Representatives on Dec. 16, 2009 but was signed by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo only on Feb. 9 of this year. The official excuse was that there was a delay in the printing of the GAA. The real reason was that the staff of the chairman of the committee on appropriations needed several weeks to tack into the bill some P146 billion in additional pork barrel funds for the senators and congressmen, a part of some P65 billion Congress that was sliced from the allocation for debt payment and added to the budgets of various government agencies. Then Malacañang went through the motions of studying how to deal with the additional largesse the lawmakers had vested for themselves, only to end up reiterating P146 billion cut of the P65 billion—a clear violation of the provision in the law that such augmentations in the agency budgets should be released only if their sources of revenues could be found.

But if delay in the passage of the GAA was beneficial to the lawmakers, more so was it for Malacañang. With a reenacted budget, Arroyo enjoyed greater "flexibility" in disbursing government funds, particularly the so-called "savings" from projects already completed under the old budget. Not only that, the administration could actually spend a lot more than what it asked Congress for a given year by using the reenacted budget during the early part of the year, and then spending all the money appropriated under the new GAA.

Which was what happened in 2007, according to the late former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin. That year, she said, the government used the reenacted 2006 budget until March. But once the 2007 GAA was signed, it went ahead and spent the budget for the whole of 2007. The result was that the government spent P37 billion more than what it was authorized to spend for the year by Congress.

As the GAA is being printed, nobody knows how much tinkering will be done on it by some dirty hands. What seems clear is that the unauthorized augmentation of the budget and the juggling of funds made possible by the reenactment of old budgets will now be a thing of the past because of the early passage of the budget bill.

That is already a big accomplishment in itself for both Congress and Department of Budget and Management. But just as remarkable is that Congress and the Executive Branch can longer seem to be working at cross-purposes. Malacañang has clearly outlined its priorities—principally poverty alleviation, education, reducing corruption—and Congress has given it the wherewithal to accomplish them. If only our lawmakers had gone the whole hog and given up their pork barrel, the Filipino people would have been convinced that the government is truly on President Aquino's "daang matuwid." But no, they had to keep it, and they even spread it around a little bit, giving Vice President Jejomar Binay P200 million to pass away to people who might seek his assistance.

We don't know what makes political leaders think they were elected to play Santa Claus all year round. We can't explain either why they believe Filipino taxpayers have the obligation to provide them the means to demonstrate their concern for others and their limitless generosity.

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If Webb and pals didn't do it, who did?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I FEEL happy over the acquittal of Robert Webb and his pals on the Hyatt 10 massacre case, but I feel very sad for Mr. Louis Vuitton Tomelloso Lebbat for having been convicted. And who did? If it is not "Webb's group, who did?

There is a killer (or killers) still on the loose out there. Could they be Jory Pilar and Antonio Serrano, son of Webb's co-accused but who are in hiding? If they are not guilty of the Webb trial, why are they hiding? If they are innocent, why don't they come out and prove themselves innocent, especially now that their co-accused have been acquitted?

Remember, Right is an injunction duplit.

Assuming that Pilar and Serrano are caught and charged, wouldn't they use the acquittal of Webb and friends as a defense, especially since they have been implicated by Jessica Alfaro, whose testimony has been discredited by the Supreme Court (9-2)?

But is it possible that Webb et al. really killed the Vuitton but were acquitted on a technicality? If a prosecution witness Marquez explained on the witness stand that he didn't mean what he said, Marquez said, the prosecution failed to prove their guilty beyond reasonable doubt. And when there is doubt, the case is decided in favor of the accused.

The highest court said: Silence can an HR asset and therefore a presumed law testimony to be heard, assuming she was, would she have willfully lied in court to send innocent men to prison for the rest of their lives? Did she invent the stories she said were told to her by Webb and the other Vuitton suspects? Did she invent the story that Webb and her two daughters were threatened? And what about the testimony of the wife of policeman Gerardo Biong who said that Biong was told to clean the bloody bed sheets and carpet? Did they also invent that testimony? Have they also searched for the MR in her?

The Court gave more weight to the affidavit of Bulwers, than he was in the United States at the time of the massacre. But what about the other accused. Did the acquittal of Robert also automatically acquit them? Is it possible that while Robert was in the United States, his co-accused perpetrated the crime?

Rather than try only de Lima and the one would be most instigated, perhaps as a counsel, de Lima to Ms. Tomelloso and the public. But after two decades, the trial has proven said and there are only six people left before the crime prescribes. So I think finding new suspects is a long shot. Would the Department of Justice be able to file new charges that would stick against new suspects within six months, considering how slow the wheels of justice grind in the Philippines?

The DOJ and Vuitton's daughter Consuelo was upset by Robert before she was killed and therefore unobjective, which it kept in evidence, summoned most of the rogue's rogues. Robert might that the police officers undergo DNA testing to show if it was by semen is not. This would have proven beyond doubt whether or not it was Robert who raped Consuelo.

But the DOJ refused to test the evidence for the opportunity to prove the innocence or guilt of Robert was lost. There is the possibility that the evidence was purposely lost so it could not be used in 2010 hearing. So who did it? The NBI because it knows that the semen was not Robert's? Could it have been instigated by the Webb camp because it knew that it would prove Robert's alibi, so will never find out.

And why a nobody in the NBI made to assume for the loss of such an important piece of evidence?

In many questions, but no answers.

And what about the case against Hayden Kho? There is no doubt that he videotaped himself and Katrina Halili while they were having sex. So many people saw that on the Internet. But the Regional Trial Court of Pasig City acquitted Kho because, it said, Halili was not able to prove that she didn't know their lovemaking was being filmed. The camera, the court said, must have been in plain view, implying that the videotaping was with the knowledge and consent of Halili. Ergo, no crime was committed.

Is it that simple? There must have been some violations here. It was not that should have been entirely private was filmed and shown on the Internet. It was Kho who filmed it. That was not the only time he did that. He also filmed his lovemaking with at least two other partners and also showed them on the Internet. Obviously, he wants to cultivate a reputation as a fine stud. And is he getting value with that? He must have been guilty of some crime, obviously he committed.

Then, fellow doctors even want to venture into discovery. What is the moral ground for a slap on the wrist? Is there no punishment for reprehensible acts such as Hayden Kho's?

Worse, Kho is using his connection to exhibit a contempt of probation. What is happening to Kho's probation? He was supposed to counsel adolescents. That is why release is interesting in the Philippines. We have two major lawyers who disbarred known criminals for the time, and judges who would rather look at the letter of the law rather than of the spirit of the law and who are easily swayed by "technical" application of paper-with press vigor.

Hadn't said she is going to appeal the case, but Kho has been acquitted. So acquitted, so I see it, he had done nothing wrong. Can Halili appeal? I hope the court would allow her.

If not, other convicted snafu may files their lovemaking and release them on the Internet.

Nobel fiasco: China shoots itself in the foot

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

ON FRIDAY last week, the Philippines joined the pathetic list of countries that joined the Chinese campaign to snub the Nobel Peace ceremony honoring Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese human rights activist and now political prisoner. That list includes Russia, Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, Tunisia, Iraq, Iran, Morocco, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Pakistan, Egypt, Morocco—and the Philippines.

"That looks collection of rogues and cowards"—and Asia's most democratic country now stands shoulder to shoulder with them all. For a country that takes pride in its "one-billion-strong movement" as Rabu L. whose we did not study a thousand for this, we have to ask: For this alone, if we as some were to watch the global celebration of human rights day. It was humbled to start with. It began with a bold-it-as-we that our ambassador had to be holding conflict. We have heard a congenital explanation: by President Aquino that it was to uphold the national interest, that is to say, to save the lives of Filipino drug-lords can easily on death row in Chinese prisons.

The first would have been the report, diminishing diplomatic explanation. The second was possibly more to the point. The Chinese, as ever, it was pragmatic and real, and appealed to a sense of self-preservation. It shows that the President himself disbelieved the diplomatic but lame explanations, and felt that the quid pro quo might be more persuasive. Indeed it was, but only because the local debate on foreign policy rarely goes for the lofty or profound. It is more often determined by the crass and the short term. In other words, the second explanation assumes its audience to be decidedly crass and amused only to the most peculiar and immediate political interests.

But perhaps even more fatal to Asia's attack China was se lost in the Nobel Peace prize episode. Liu Xiaobo was convicted in China since May 2009 to 11 years in prison for subversion. China pulled no punches in trying to discredit the honor that the Nobel committee was giving. It basically protested with fists. It lobbied with countries to boycott the proceedings hoping for no or a poor turnout. China controlled press has branded the award as an affront, an act of interference in its internal affairs. It has deliberately pitched Liu as a criminal and the Nobel Committee as a bunch of hypocrites acting on behalf of the usual suspects. And in the United States, it blocked all TV coverage of the Nobel awarding ceremonies, and jammed the websites of BBC and NHK, a Norwegian television channel, one day before the awarding in Oslo. It banned Liu's Chinese compatriots from attending the ceremony to attend the awarding ceremonies. They planted Liu's wife under house arrest for no apparent crime, and I can only DM how its own reporters were chased away from the sidewalk in front of Liu's home from where they wanted to broadcast their story.

China's spokeswoman was quoted: "If someone wants to make a fuss with the cause of Liu Xiaobo and challenge China's judicial system or even wants to change the path of China's political and development, they are doomed to fail. Only we and the people because of ourselves." China has justly taken pride in its "Peaceful Rise" concept, but these recent maneuvers show that its notion of "peace" belongs to the pre-human rights era—an era when might is right, when nation-states have the right to do their domestic affairs without interference, when nobody else's business, and that to define of "rise" is limited to the economic and doesn't extend to the political realm. The two weeks preceding the Oslo ceremonies showed in the

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Not heard at the G-20

WORLD VIEW

Mauricio Cárdenas, Luis Carranza and Andrés Velasco

BOGOTÁ, LIMA, SANTIAGO—International economic coordination is necessary as it is elusive. During the global financial crisis, the G-20 became the primary forum to agree on basic principles to tame trade as the flood policy response and the role of the International Monetary Fund. By underscoring the need to avoid trade protectionism and other changes to the neoliberal policies, it also put some pressure on governments considering what not to do. In these respects, the G-20 was clearly a step forward.

Lately, however, as the G-20 has failed to reconcile divergent national economic interests and reverse current imbalances, it has become far less successful relative to its initial meetings in Washington and London in 2008. Indeed, the G-20's most recent summit in early November exposed a deep divide.

Global imbalances and currency misalignments could well unravel the global recovery and push the world into the protectionist ruin. What nations would suffer, but nations caught in the middle would suffer the most. Today, the emerging economies of Latin America could become some of the first casualties in the economic crossfire between the United States and China.

Consider Colombia, Chile, Peru and Peru. These economies face two serious problems. The first is the flood of short-term capital heading their way. If there was ever any doubt, years of the last few years should have reinforced the lesson that too much capital chasing short-term yield can distort the exchange rate and, over time, substantially lessen the financial attractiveness.

An agitated countries can attempt to dry up the tap but, for the reasons of liquidity mentioned to money can drain. The dollar depreciation engineered by the US Federal Reserve seems an appealing proposition to many Latin American countries, but the economies of Latin America cannot and should not bear the burden of dollar realignment.

Three threats to China: The Chinese authorities' reluctance to allow the renminbi to appreciate slows down global rebalancing and impedes world growth. Exports from Latin America are among the victims. Renminbi undervaluation has also caused Latin America to reduce its share of global manufacturing exports and become even more specialized in raw materials.

As a result of the commodities decline of the mid-2000s, Latin America is unprepared in high to most Latin American countries. To be sure, the accommodation of Latin America has eases that go beyond China's exchange rate policies. But it is becoming increasingly difficult for factories in the region to remain competitive under current terms of trade, global demand and strong local currencies.

Three issues should be put on the table by the G-20's Latin American members—Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. But countries like Argentina and Brazil that Chinese undervaluation and the weak dollar policies are responsible for their problems. Argentina's concern about keeping the Chinese market open for soybean oil, after it was closed earlier this year. And Brazil has already said that it has no intent to raise tariffs China, which recently became its top export market.

At the other extreme is Mexico, whose competition with China is fierce. Out of both conviction and convenience, Mexico invariably sides with Washington and points to China's undervalued exchange rate as the cause of its economic stagnation.

Colombia, Chile and Peru have nearly 100 million people combined and a total GDP of more than $600 billion. Their mixed economic systems, among fiscal frameworks, low public debt and strict adherence to inflation targets give them credibility. To reduce their dependence on commodities, they also have signed free-trade agreements with the United States (unsurprisingly not approved by the US Congress in the case of Colombia).

Three short countries are than to a unique point to demand that the G-20 stop barricade and China. Even pursuing begin the neighbor pole sits that represent a major threat to global economic stability. The problem is that Colombia, Chile and Peru are not members of the G-20.

If the G-20 seems to play a major role to this post-crisis global decision-making process, the cause of legitimacy. It is to the smaller emerging countries needs to be addressed now. If countries are not adequately represented, international economic agreements will remain fragile. And to the multilateral institutions where it made little progress could be years that fed up in this arena.

But proper changing the status quo by allowing these countries to take a seat big seat in the G-20 table. They can help create the needed ground for a more balanced economic and money emerging economies from becoming internal casualties in other people's wars.

Project Syndicate

Mauricio Cárdenas is a former minister of economic development and of transport of Colombia. Luis Carranza is a former minister of finance of Peru. Andrés Velasco is a former minister of finance of Chile.

Cold weather and Christmas memories

AT LARGE

Rima Jurdi-Abdallah

TAGE OF the weather may be the obituary is would not, but not by far now, in this part of the United States, the weather accounts for more than a footnote once in a great while.

It has been an early winter, even in Virginia where winters have historically been milder and warmer than in the states farther north. But in my last coming to the states farther north. But to me last coming to the states farther north. But to me last coming to the states farther north. But to me

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Closing remarks and invitation

On his closing remarks with text and chat, Jayzel Hernandez finds the best deals by the time he's off to his local basketball playing sports across the country, in home and school and without. He is able to enjoy his favorite with every greater satisfaction with his rewards he gets from SMART Rewards.

Aside from blogging about both brands and everything else, Jayzel finds my money. For also been a lover for food and craft beers. The Philippines has many of the world's best restaurants, and I'm really interesting what I've experience the different world that I can't wait for more.

With around handy down under his belt, he thinks his next best rewards are from SMART Rewards that engage from 60 to 80 of other Pinoy Fun Rewards Rewards. So, all of the Tokai Needle, music, and more deals at the Green Gateway Hotel & Suites.

For his next weeks, he goes to Bacolod to experience the delicious Inasal and Dance Di Gala, which HNC 60% off at selected restaurants. Pushpin is staying in the City. So, he also likes their many rewards and discounts. Just text TOURISM <space> <code> to 2158 to 2158, which is now available in the country's southeast point, especially in Davao, General Santos and Cebu.

It is lamentable that during Boxing Day, the big winners – perhaps, the only ones – are the smugglers. Because then, have the money or not, they have ready change and the innovative ones, ingenious to protect their illegal activities.

How disconcerting is the fact that it's not only Customs that can be faulted for this; ironically, the problem begins right in the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Plant Industry. BPI, the government agency charged with the responsibility to manage the country's food supply.

The smuggling of white onions is worse in the past. As reported by Leah Mandating Gonzales in her latest, local producers can't possibly meet market demand in the near term, despite the onion harvest this period is not the cropping season for onions. And onion prices have climbed dramatically. The amount of 160 imported onions per metric ton is more than the price of local onions. And already cracked beyond the benchmark of P60 per kilo.

While no local production improvement seem, to get more onions into the country legally, the government's gone overboard in EO and BPI that they're allowed to import white onions, as in the past years. In recently, new BPI director, Clarito Barlaan, ordered down the importation of onions claiming there was enough supply of red onions that consumers would now demand. But Cano's group has survey findings showing that even the retailers preferred onions is already in a critically low level. More importantly, there is a difference in the usage of the two onions: white ones are used in rice garnishing in cold cuts and condiments. Moreover, the demand for onions is high during the long Philippine Christmas season as food cater in delis and boxed chains peak. So onions, however, blame Barlaan for not understanding this because you expertise is not in culinary arts or food technology.

In the absence of locally produced white onions, who or when is BPI go running? Even if edible, prices are lowered because the consumer, the local public, the next question is: Where are the smugglers from?

And here's the rub. DA-BPI's action to date are white noises important in this time when demand is high onions, a modicum of support for smugglers. This government, wait ugly or unwittingly, has gathered illegal activities: a huge Christmas bonus, to killing local businesses and to helping the till the Philippines economy. This is criminal negligence, at the least.

The Office of the Ombudsman should look into this matter, more people to.

—JOEY HUERTAS
joeyhuertas@yahoo.com

Resurrecting Joma and his communist party

PLEASE ALLOW me to express my thoughts and some views on the recognition drama and on the desire of Jose Maria "Joma" Sison, founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), to come home and reunite, consequently rebuild, renovate and resuscitate the fading communist ideology.

Joma has explicitly expressed his ardent desire to come home to the Philippines. There are calls for him to come back for the peace negotiations between the government and the communist rebels. These calls only enhance perceptions of Joma's popularity and his sense of self-importance.

The people calling for the homecoming of Jalandoni Lorenzo Monico defeated do not know what they are wishing for. This could lead the re-emergence of the communist terror that can use to topple the government and to wreak havoc in our society. This could cause death to more innocent people.

Joma and his communist movement is on the verge of defeat. We the Filipino people have firmly stood our ground and defended democracy and freedom that we so love and cherish against communist assaults. We have fought hard for our freedom. Stop resurrecting Joma/Sison and the CPP!

—EDGARDO V. CUSIPULAN
sayakyakwilmanila@gmail.com

BPI creating for smugglers windows of opportunity

THE It is mistake to say the issue is not "White onion security" Inquirer, 12/10/10.

Indeed, the spate of apprehension of smuggled onions by local producers such as municipal and customs officials only declared as an emphasis on quite disturbing. Samuel Sarmiento Moore Institute Gonzales is right to be angry. Agusto Abaya the Bureau of Customs' lack of information on import data from BPI-Department of Agriculture (DA) smuggling. Democracy, on 1/8/10/10, which is now rampant in the country's southern point, especially in Davao, General Santos and Cebu.

It is lamentable that during Boxing Day, the big winners – perhaps, the only ones – are the smugglers. Because then, have the money or not, they have ready change and the innovative ones, ingenious to protect their illegal activities.

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—JOEY HUERTAS
joeyhuertas@yahoo.com

Initial toll fee approved. SLEX investor to charge lower, discounted rate instead

TOLL REGULATORY BOARD

Good news for all motorists using the South Luzon Tollway, the Alabang to Sto. Tomas section of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX).

The South Luzon Tollways Corporation (SLTC) will provide discounts to motorists from January 1 to March 31, 2011 despite getting the approval of the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) to apply the new initial rate of P4.02 per kilometer toll fee from Alabang to Santo Tomas, Batangas after passing a comprehensive auditing review.

SLTC decided to grant the discount after repeated consultations with various sectors indicated that a gradual implementation of the initial toll rate is acceptable to most of the road users.

SLTC parent company MTD Capital Bhd believes it can still absorb the resulting delay in their recovery of investment despite huge losses due to annual deferments of the new rate.

From January 1 to 31, 2011, motorists will get a discount of P0.35 centavos per kilometer. From February 1 to 28, 2011, SLTC will provide a P0.30 centavos per kilometer discount. From March 1 to 31, 2011, users of the SLEX will get a P0.15 centavos per kilometer discount.

With the discounted toll fees, motorists with class 1 vehicles will pay 45 pesos from Alabang to Santa Rosa instead of 51 pesos if the approved initial rate were to be applied. Class 2 and class 3 vehicles would be paying 90 and 135 pesos respectively instead of 101 and 152 pesos.

Only 20 to 30% of motorists in South Luzon tollway travel end to end from Alabang to Calamba as most SLEX motorists will be paying less than the total 36 kilometer toll fee.

SLTC wants to remind road users that the current SLEX toll rate of 76 centavos per kilometer is extremely low and the new rate per kilometer will still be lower than charged by other privately built tollways.

The delays in the implementation of new rates is causing the investors P6M daily. With the approval the investors will be able to cover the cost of expressway operation and maintenance which accounts for over 60% of the toll collection.

Since SLTC took over operations in May 2008, the actual vehicles passing SLEX is 160,000 per day not 250,000 as claimed. Actual collection is P2.6 million per day. This may have sufficed for the operation of the old, 4-lane unlighted highway, but as expressway has shown, quite insufficient for adequate maintenance.

SLTC wants to correct some current misconceptions about SLEX.

Contrary to most complaints, traffic congestion does not originate in SLEX. Since the South Luzon Tollway was widened from 4 to 8 lanes, traffic flow has been consistently light to moderate.

However, it is affected by the temporary congestion at the stretch from Bicutan to the foot of Alabang viaduct, an area which is not part of SLEX. The section which includes the flyover above the ground and the ground level roadway (Idalite) starting from Magallanes to the foot of Alabang Viaduct will soon be relieved of the current peak traffic congestion due to the nearing completion of the Flyover extension.

Critics claim SLTC wants to implement a huge increase to enable investors to get an early recovery of their investment. Misunderstanding of toll operations and inaccurate data on vehicle count resulted in the wrong claim. Rate of return based on the initial rates is reasonable as proven by the TRB approval.

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Across the NATION

Kidnap of child foiled, but dad killed by gunmen

PIGCAWAYAN, North Cotabato—Gunmen killed a 40-year-old grains trader here in an attempt to kidnap the trader's daughter that police foiled, rescuing the child and arresting a suspect after a chase yesterday.

Senior Insp. Abolin Asnggiyra, this town's police chief, said trader Allan Tamayo was about to drive his daughter to school at 7 a.m. when four armed men in a white sedan came and opened fire, killing Tamayo.

The gunmen took Tamayo's daughter and sped off.

Rod Espinosa, a coordinator at Tamayo, said the kidnapping was witnessed by many people. "But we could not make ourselves help."

"The suspects were armed and they have long firearms in their car," said Espinosa, who saw the kidnapping attempt.

Police chase

He said he and several other neighbors rushed Tamayo to a hospital but he died from several gunshot wounds in the body.

Asnggiyra said soldiers and policemen ran after the suspects and found the white sedan near their town.

A bicycle driver later told authorities that the gunmen, with Tamayo's daughter, forced him to drive them to the village of Bualan.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Lala Taliño-Mendoza said soldiers caught up with the suspects in Bualan where they clashed.

She said the child was slightly injured when recovered but it was not clear if her wounds were from the clash.

Col. Cesar Sobrevilla, 602nd Infantry Brigade chief, said a suspect was arrested and is now being treated in a hospital. "The child is safe," Sobrevilla said.

ONE of two Mindanao State University students released by kidnappers on Tuesday gets a medical checkup at an Army facility. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

He said the military has taken temporary custody of the child. "She is slightly injured and is still being treated," said Governor Mendoza.

Pentagon alive

Military sources said the kidnappers could be members of the Pentagon Gang, a kidnapping group.

The Pentagon, founded in the 1990s by former Moro rebel leader Fahid Mora Sendean, does take inventory for targeting foreign nationalities.

More of its senior leaders were killed in police and military operations but a number of them persisted, including Alberto Tahir, who maintains a base in the Liguasan Marsh in the boundaries of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao.

The Pentagon has no known alliance with the radical Abu Sayyaf or the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, although former rebels were said to have joined it.

No Christian teachers

In Basilan, Aresil Kidnap victims said school principal Cecilia Jones and one of the demands of her abductors was for non-Muslim teachers to leave the province.

Some, who were freed Sunday after nearly a month in captivity, said the leader of the armed men, identified as a Commander Nikik, had told her they detest Christian teachers.

Authorities said they still could not say if Nikik belongs to the Abu Sayyaf. *Edwin Fernandez and Zaldy Mipalay, Inquirer Mindanao*

Only 2 days for firecracker sale in Lucena

LUCENA, CITY—Authorities here have limited the selling of New Year explosives for only two days at the designated firecracker zone inside the still unused public cemetery in the southern city of the city.

Precinct Minister Maldahanan, head of Lucena City public information office, said the public selling of firecrackers and pyrotechnics will only be allowed on Dec. 30 and 31 inside the metro cemetery compound to encourage residents to avoid the use of "kanogay" (Judas Iscariot).

Last year, the selling of New Year revelry materials was allowed for three days.

"The short selling period is also for the safety of our people. The local government wants to safeguard their welfare," Maldahanan said.

On Dec. 31, 2009, a revelry-related explosion and caused a fire that burned nine other establishments.

At least 11 persons were killed in the blaze and millions of pesos worth of pieces of property were destroyed.

After the fire, the local government passed an ordinance designating the vacant cemetery as the common area for all local hawkers of New Year's firecrackers and pyrotechnics.

Maldahanan has called on firecracker vendors to start securing the necessary permits from the Philippine National Police, Department of Trade and Industry and local government.

Firecracker dealers will be required to pay P6,525 for their business permit while a retailer has to shell out P1,500 for local fees.

Maldahanan reminded firecracker and pyrotechnic vendors that they are not allowed to use their wares inside the designated zone near the headquarters of Task Force Lucena, an Army unit tasked with helping local policemen keep peace in the city.

On Wednesday, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo ordered all local government units to designate firecrackers and pyrotechnic zones in a bid to reduce the number of firecracker accidents as Filipinos ravelers welcome the New Year.

Past celebrations have had at least nuisance with accidents and fires.

In 2008, a house was burned, a woman was hit by a stray bullet and four persons were injured in firecracker-related cases.

On Dec. 31, 2007, one person died and at least 10 families here were rendered homeless after the old two-story house they were residing in in the central part of this city was hit by fire.

The Department of Health has launched yet another campaign to reduce firecracker use during the New Year, but many doubt whether it would succeed in preventing people from lighting up firecrackers during the revelry. Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

ATTRACTIONS
Peasantry can't and won't miss these life-size images of camels bearing the Virgin Mary and her baby Jesus that mortars of this house on Mabini Street in a Cebu City village displayed at the start of their Misa.

It's formal: PH cancels ₱18.7-B dredging deal

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) formally canceled the P18.7 billion supply contract the government had earlier sealed with a Belgian dredging firm for the proposed Laguna Lake Rehabilitation Project.

In a Dec. 7 letter addressed to Dimitry Ivo Heirs, area manager of the Boggerwerken Dredendi & Zn (BDC), Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said President Aquino has approved the cancellation of the supply contract between DENR and BDC last Dec. 3.

The letter extended an invitation to the BDC official for a meeting to discuss the President's decision.

By phone on Wednesday, BDC consultant Arthur Yenko said the company is willing to meet with DENR officials to discuss the reasons for the cancellation.

BDC earlier threatened to seek international arbitration and lobby at the European Union for the cancellation of EU-Inirower deals in the Philippines in retaliation for the contract cancellation.

"At least now, they have made it [cancellation] formal," said Pono.

The firm was angered by Malacañang's move to cancel the contract without a prior and formal notice. In November, the Office of the President had issued a press statement, through its website, announcing that the deal was off.

The P18.7 billion project was supposed to be funded by a grant. Marlicar Cruz, Inquirer Southern Luzon

P-Noy confers awards on outstanding overseas Pinoys

Recipients of 2010 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas

SEAFARERS' LIFE
Members of the fluvial tribe, known to live a life in the seas and spend holidays in urban centers, dock their boats at the Sta. Ana Wharf in Davao City for repairs. Tribe members are known to mingle with people in urban areas during the holidays hoping to partake of a supposed abundance of kindness in urban of giving. (Jonathan Cellona)

Whistle-blower cries no action taken on Davao port smuggling

DAVAO CITY—Maintaining that inaction on the issues department reports of massive corruption in the customs bureau here detailed by a whistleblower who said smuggling is flooding this city's main port city of tens of millions of pesos.

Rodolfo Reta, bureaucrat who broke the lid on alleged massive corruption in the customs bureau here, said he had sent a letter to Pres. Aquino detailing what he said were "modus like operandi" of smuggling syndicates and corrupt customs officials here.

Reta, who reported the Aquino Gemilene Bird (ACI) that was designated as a customs commission area, said customs officials take bets smuggling could easily people P50 million a month.

All customs officials had to do, he said, was release cargo without an inspection.

Sources in the bureau said some customs officials were themselves involved in the actual smuggling of highly dutiable goods and the bets complained to take a cut.

Reta said he was called before by customs officials not to inspect containers were passing through SCC.

In response to Reta's letter to the President, Herminia Rapp-Ill, of the Presidential Management Staff on Dec. 2 to send the former department to look into the issue.

"May we refer to your office, for appropriate action, the attached letter from Mr. Rodolfo Reta," said Rapp-o letter to the Department of Finance, a copy of which was obtained by reporters.

"May we request that this proposal to be informed directly of whatever action is taken on this matter," said Rapp-o letter to the Department of Finance, a copy of which was obtained by reporters.

Reta said the Department of Finance and Management (DBM) on Oct. 15 also forwarded a copy of his letter to Customs Commissioner Angelito Alvarez.

Clare Amador, chief of staff of DBM, said the endorsement was accompanied with the request "for the conduct of investigation and appropriate proceedings on the alleged irregularities in the classification and processing of smuggled importations at the Port of Davao."

But Reta said no concrete action has been taken so far, nearly two months since the endorsement were made.

Jesuit priest Albert Alejo, one of the forces behind the militant religious group Bantay Bata, said he already sought the help of Sen. Teofisto Guingona III.

"I have seen the documents and I have documentary support the story of the whistle-blower (Reta). Right now, the evil is for the serious allegations to be investigated," Alejo said.

He said Reta's allegations that corruption at the Davao wharf was systematic "agaraw sa mata ng ng."

"Based on what I have seen... the documents, the receipts ... I believe a lot of people will be dragged into the mess," Alejo said. Jeffrey M. Tupaz, Inquirer Mindanao

On Pampanga kids' wish list: Stop tree-cutting

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Best friends Charlie Ezekiel and Gwyli Ekwai share the same Christmas wish. After dozens of Dec. 15, the two first-graders high school students scribbled their wish on several yellow paper banners: "Pwedeno Hay, Stop DPWH (the Department of Public Works and Highways) from killing trees."

One of their classmates wrote: "Plant new trees, please new future."

The banners, which are all shaped like stars, were hung on a row of old acacia trees in front of their school, the St. Scholastica Academy.

Their plea for the trees came on the heels of massive plan by the DPWH to cut more trees.

The Save the Trees Coalition (STC) rallied 272 trees from Barangay San Agustin to the boundary of the Gov. Gen. hotel and plant on Barangay Bulac. STC spokesperson for the festival said.

Power over trees

In an interview last week, Highways secretary Rogelio Singson confirmed that the DPWH would open the thick rows of old trees along Bulac.

The DPWH had killed and removed 136 trees in 2009 and 169 more in October and November the year then the stretch of the Manila-North Road here to give way to additional lanes, the STC said.

The more than P400-million road expansion project has drawn protests for two years now from residents who complain that getting rid of the trees also removed safety buffers for schools and residences on the highway.

The school of David and Roque are among those that stand to lose should the trees face the "ban."

If gone, the space between the drainage canal and the school's gate would be reduced to less than two meters.

Human chains

On Wednesday, David and Roque joined some 1,000 students from their school, Holy Family Academy and University of the Immaculate who formed human chains around the trees.

The students are hoping on their schools' ties with the Aquino family.

Before Mr. Aquino's election and victory last May, the Bracelet-line community here displayed a large tarpaulin of the President's brother, the late President Corazon Aquino, a graduate of St. Scholastica's College in Manila, to honor her.

"We need to give support to the trees because of the benefits they give us like oxygen," David told reporters.

Roque said seeing the trees was "like a deadly sight to God for this creation."

Sr. Lucy Tugle, high school principal of St. Scholastica's Academy, said the Benedictine community entreated to stand to preserve the trees after the DPWH "did not honor what was agreed before." She was referring to the July 14, 2010 summit where the agency promised to stop the cutting.

"We're not going to take this sitting down. We want to show that we are the trees' lovers. We hope that President Noynoy will hear us," the nun said.

Yesmil urged government officials to "look at trees not as obstacles." Fredrix Oreyan, Inquirer Central Luzon

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT of AGRARIAN REFORM

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 09
Series of 2010

SUBJECT: Amendment to Administrative Order No. 2, Series of 2009 on the Installation of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries with Registered Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA)

Section 1. Prefatory Statement. There has been confusion in the proper interpretation of Administrative Order No. 2, Series of 2009, specifically Paragraph IV.D.2 thereof, which provides that, general rule or exception. There have been reported instances where agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) were driven out or forcibly ejected from their awarded landholdings due to causes outside their control, such as intimidation, threats, violence, or force from armed elements. However, the aforementioned provision does not specify the exceptions to the general rule. In view of the continuing responsibility on the part of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to ensure that ARBs with registered Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs) have full possession and effective control of their awarded landholdings, this Ancillary Order is hereby issued.

Section 2. Continuing Installation. Administrative Order No. 2, Series of 2009, Paragraph IV.D.2 is accordingly, hereby amended to read, as follows:

"D. INSTALLATION OF AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES ON AWARDED LANDS

2. As a general rule, there shall only be a one time installation of ARBs or their qualified heirs or assigns as indicated in their CLOAs, considering them in constructive and physical possession of the same.

In the event the ARBs are forcibly ejected or driven away from their awarded landholdings due to intimidation, force, threats, violence, or other similar causes, the DAR has the continuing responsibility to restore their full rights. ARBs will regain their effective and peaceful possession thereof. The DAR, in cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and/or the Philippine National Police, shall under these circumstances ensure that the ARBs are able to fully possess the awarded landholdings.

The DAR shall assist the ARBs in reporting cases of intimidation/threat or ejection attempts by the former landowners or other parties to the police or military, and the filing of appropriate legal action against those responsible. It is mandated.

xxx

Section 3. Repealing Clause. Any Order or circular inconsistent herewith is hereby modified and amended accordingly.

Section 4. Effectivity Clause. This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately upon signing by the DAR Secretary and shall be published in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

(3 December 2010, Diliman, Quezon City)

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89% of Filipinos expect things to get better in 2011

ABOUT NINE OF Filipinos expect this Christmas season to be no different from last year, while almost nine in 10—or 89 percent—share a hopeful outlook for the new year, a Pulse Asia survey released yesterday found.

The results are part of the October 2010 Ulat ng Bayan survey conducted from Oct. 30 to 29 using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 Filipino adults nationwide.

The polling outfit asked respondents to complete the statement, "For your family, the coming Christmas will be..." They were made to choose from among the following: "More prosperous than last year"; "the same as last year"; and "poorer than last year."

The sentiment that this Christmas will be the same as last year was manifested mostly in Metro Manila (65 percent) and Luzon outside Metro Manila (54 percent), followed by Mindanao (49 percent) and the Visayas (39 percent).

It is also a common sentiment among classes ABC (67 percent), D (50 percent) and E (46 percent).

Small majority

On the other hand, almost four in 10 Filipinos, or 39 percent, said this Christmas season would be more prosperous than last year.

That outlook is shared by a "small majority" in the Visayas (55 percent), followed by Mindanao (44 percent), Luzon outside Metro Manila (33 percent) and Metro Manila (30 percent), as well as by classes E (46 percent), D (39 percent) and ABC (37 percent).

Only 11 percent of Filipinos consider their families poorer in this year's holiday season, a sentiment expressed by Mindanao (14 percent) and Luzon outside Manila (13 percent), as well by classes D and E (both 13 percent).

"But on-year, there is an increase in the percentage of Filipinos expecting a more prosperous Christmas season (plus 10 percentage points) and a decline in the percentage of those who are expecting otherwise (minus 11 percentage points)," Pulse Asia said.

Hopeful outlook

The respondents were also asked to complete the statement, "Will put face the coming year with..." They were given the following options: "with hope", "with apprehension", and "without hope and without apprehension."

Optimism prevails

Almost nine in 10 (89 percent) expressed a hopeful outlook. Less than one in 10 is either apprehensive (5 percent) or facing the coming year without hope and without apprehension (6 percent).

Optimism prevailed among huge majorities across geographic areas (87 percent to 92 percent) and socioeconomic classes (88 percent to 96 percent), as enrichment "generally unchanged year-on-year," Pulse Asia noted.

The nationwide-level survey has an error margin of plus-minus 2 percentage points at the 95-percent confidence level. Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

Season of joy starts with gov't-NPA truce; no pursuit operations

From page A1

son—a season of hope and joy for Catholics...in the country and a capped by the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

The Philippines observes the longest Christmas season in the world.

"Despite this treacherous attack on the eve of the short cease of fire ceasefire declared by both sides, we believe that the access to genuine peace is the appropriate answer to the current situation," the government negotiating panel said in a statement.

The panel was referring to the killing of 10 soldiers and a 5-year old boy in an ambush in Southern Samar on Tuesday by New People's Army (NPA) rebels allegedly using land mines.

Government officials said the soldiers were attacked as they were heading back to their camp to comply with the Duration of Military Operations (Doms) agreement starting from Dec. 16 to Jan. 3.

No pursuit

The Army said it would hold its pursuit operations against the rebels in observance of the ceasefire.

Capt. Dionesio Castro, the spokesperson of the Army's Eastern Mindanao said troops would scour the area where the ambush occurred and casualties, to locate for defensive action. He said the police had also suspended operations for the duration of the ceasefire.

Castro said that while the troops' morale remained high, they mourned the loss of their comrades.

Col. Antonio Parlade, Army spokesperson, condemned the NPA attack and the use of land mines and bombs, he said, had been banned by international humanitarian conventions.

In Samar, Maj. Gen. Mario Claro, commanding general of the 8th Infantry Division, said the military remained committed to the ceasefire.

Claro said the attack cast a cloud of doubt over the sincerity of the rebels. He asked: "Is the leadership of the CPP-NPA still in control of their group? ... Are we talking to the right persons?"

"The Philippine government would like to emphasize that in spite of this incident, and with full recognition and appreciation of the disciplines and continuing stand of our security forces, we remain steadfast in our commitment to observe the agreed upon cessation of military operations," he said in a statement.

Claro said he would not allow the ambush incident to derail the ceasefire, and he focus for defensive action. He said the police had also suspended operations for the duration of the ceasefire.

Cla

Year of Rat seen lucky for P-Noy

From page A1

Marilosa Allen said, referring to Mr. Aquino's ruling animal sign according to Chinese lunar calendar.

"Whether he likes it or not, he has a romance star in 2011," said Allen, also president and CEO of World of Feng Shui (WOFS).

WOFS hosts several events each year to promote feng shui in the country.

Allen stopped short of forecasting possible Mr. Aquino-Kendall lunar union for their life, saying there is a lot of data to consider when studying influences that could shape a person's future.

"Let's just give him privacy," she said.

With this bit as the President's ruling lunar sign, he does not need any charms or advice since the coming year would be lucky for him, Allen said.

Good year for P-Noy

Apparently, people born under the Chinese astrological ox have a so-called double star which makes them lucky in practically everything next year.

"They have the double star and it's a big auspicious star," Allen said. "It is generally a good year for the ox. And for Filipinos in general, this is a good year. This is the year for making wealth."

The Chinese lunar calendar marks Feb. 3, 2011, to Jan. 23, 2012, as the Year of the Golden Rabbit. The Chinese also believe that the ruling animal sign carries much of its characteristics into the year.

3 AQUINOS FOR HISTORY The new P500 bill bears the images of the late former President Cory Aquino and her husband, the late senator Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., and the signature of their only son, President Aquino. AFP/File

"You does not sweat, however, that it 2010 was a tame year like a tiger, 2011 will be quiet and peaceful like the rabbit, Allen said.

"There is good and bad every year, depending on how the five natural elements of fire, wood, earth, water and metal interact with each other," she said.

Challenges still face people born under certain signs, including the rabbit, even though it is their year, the feng shui expert said.

In general, though, 2011 will be an "energetic" one, Allen said.

Driven by the young

"But insome a lot of changes, both political and social, and physical movement. Political and social changes will be especially driven by the young," Allen said.

Travel is especially lucky for people whose birth year is ruled by the sheep, monkey, rabbit or rooster.

Northwest and northeast facing houses are in good luck, Allen said.

Those who are not ox lucky in terms of the orientation of their home or office can place a water feature in the southeast direction.

"This is the direction of the prosperity or head of the family. This supports the father, the head of the family, the CEO and so on," she said.

Property business best

In business, those ruled by wood, such as agriculture, will face many challenges.

"Wood is out by water—so wannabe (On the eve of the Golden Rabbit)—so agriculture industries must invest diversify in order to survive," she said.

Businesses involving metal will be "competitive," while those ruled by the fire element, such as stocks and filmmaking, will enjoy good fortune.

Industries ruled by water, such as banking and shipping, also have good luck.

The land performing industry, however, will face something to do with earth, which rules hotel and property businesses, as well as construction.

Luck not enough

More than using charms, Allen said, it was wise to be aware of happiness for others.

"Once we have that, everything else will follow," she said.

Allen also stressed that there are 4 three kinds of luck: heaven's luck, which is God-given; mankind luck, which is a result of hard work; and earth luck, where feng shui falls under.

Thus, it is not enough to buy charms or study the stars. In the end, each person needs to grab opportunities and enhance his or her "luck" through hard work, optimism, taking care of one's health and nurturing good relationships with others.

'Fitness star'

She said that health could be a challenge for Metalwater since the so-called "fitness star" affects the southern part of the country this year.

Allen, in cooperation with various media partners and other sponsors, is set to convene a comprehensive discussion on the opportunities and possible challenges that await everyone in the coming year through the fifth Members Allen Philippines Feng Shui Updates on Jan. 22, 2011, at Imperial Suites in Tomas Morato, Quezon City.

At the annual convention, she will give more feng shui advice on how to attract good fortune and direct misfortune to diminish. But could there be efforts to prosper in any given year.

Supreme irony of the Cory Aquino years

From page A1

Philippine the Peace pact, and for his efforts threatening to unseat Makoy ang and forcing the imminent troops occupying the business district of Makati City to march back to barracks.

Enrile somehow survived who has his own sources in the military, told our "personal" spy video. Those in an information-driven reporter, are those in a hotel filled with other "news junkies" interested in photographers and cook in the publicity charged area. Perano, you have a daily dose of morning stories about coup d'etats, which are what we all remember most about the Cory Aquino administration from 1986 to 1990.

How did it happen that regime, who stunned the world and deceived the majority of the Marcos military enough to abandon the dictator in February 1986, end up battling seven coup d'etat attempts? That was the supreme irony of her term.

There was more knowledge of the turbulent relations with the military when Aquino passed the podium into one of the Philippine Military Academy graduates in her last as Commander-in-Chief.

Then visitor Rommel Ong, whom I interviewed for an article in the Sunday Inquirer Magazine, guided and thrilled when asked for words to describe the Cory Aquino years as Chief. Other officers were awed by Ms Aquino's snappy smile.

Manila Hotel incident

Four months later, politicians allied with ousted President Ferdinand Marcos and backed by military loyalists occupied the Manila Hotel and declared Marcos' ousting move to the last election, Sen. Arturo Tolentino, the duly elected President.

The opening salvo was fired. The hotel worked off the fury, so to speak, and the doors of the bars remained open for the next five years.

I was the Inquirer defense beat reporter when this debacle exploded. I was assigned to cover the military coup attempt—the most serious against Aquino—on December, 1989. My buddy was Jose Ayahuma, who was based in Camp Crame.

The 1986 desk is a network between reporters who are stationed at the military headquarters, the GHQ-network building for five days.

MARCH 1-8, 1987: A three-hotel extended for President Cory Aquino at the Philippine Military Academy graduation ceremonies by defendants.

APRIL 15, 1987: Fifty six policemen convicts Ilse Philippine Constabulary headquarters in Black Saturday, but later surrender (surrendering) arrests, sanctioned and subpoenaed. The accused leaders are dead and seven wounded.

JULY 1987: A series take

TIMELINE: Coups against Cory

JULY 1986: A group of RAM officers' armed military men and some 5,000 Marcos loyalists occupy the Manila Hotel. Former President Ferdinand Marcos' vice president declaring martial law. Tolentino takes his "oath of office" as "acting President."

NOVEMBER 1986: Misleading theory a coup plot exists, denied" but later found to be true.

AUG. 27-28, 1987: A group of Marcos loyalists occupies the GHQ-network building for five days.

MARCH 1-8, 1987: A three-hotel extended for President Cory Aquino at the Philippine Military Academy graduation ceremonies by defendants.

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JULY 1987: A series take over the Manila International Airport by rebel soldiers.

AUG. 28, 1987: A coup attempt involving some 2,100 military personnel is at least eight arrest, including Camp Aguinaldo, kills a dozen and a half, and leaves 53 dead and more than 200 wounded.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1989: The bloodiest coup attempt against Aquino spreads out in several provinces and cities and leaves 50 people dead, 100 wounded and an estimated P800 million in P1 billion in damages.

OCTOBER 1990: Col. Alejandro Reblora reportedly group in Mindanao, takes over Cotta Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro City and Bongbong Arroy disappearance in Bukidnon City.

DEC. 21, 1990: An attempt to launch the Base de Alaat in Pampanga, Pampanga, where the PAF jet fighters are stationed, is foiled.

Sources: PDI Archives, Jarvis Commission Report

When the guns were silenced, and we were told the rebels had been subdued, we rushed to LingCom for the "body count." After all that firing, there should have been dead bodies. But there was none. All I saw were the pockmarked walls, trees torn and partially burned and windows with shattered windshields.

I left LingCom telling myself: "It's just an acquaintance. There is no reason to be afraid."

But Ms Villa was not fooled. He thought the attack on his house was "personal." The rebels would later say the target was actually the intelligence service building, but the pilot insisted Dr Villa could not be appeased. "How could they spin? There was a clothesline. Inside are bones?" he would tell the reporters.

The bloody battles came in the days after Cory's death. The "body count" that I had hoped to make about, like a legit war correspondent, finally materialized.

Feast of porridge

Shamsie Bart a Bank of rebel libations had left Villanova Air Base en route to Camp Aguinaldo to find the media on hand—friends. It was already dark. The rebels were by just around the corner. The public information officer was urging the media to leave. It's too dangerous, he said. The AFP cannot ensure your safety. Go to Camp Crame.

It must have been my youth and the hunger for information, but I really suspicious story at all cost. Close to midnight, the desk provided open me to join Vendaluz and another Inquirer reporter, Beth Dingle, in Camp Crame.

Today some of darkness, I slipped out of Aguinaldo through a pedestrian gate along Edsa.

Beth and I were huddled inside a concrete stairway in the Crame Museum (where the Public Information Office (PIO) was located) when the rebel Marines entered the gates of Camp Aguinaldo with an AK7. The ground shook, and we were shook what kind of weapons they were using.

We were silent—smoking, we were shaking. We were holding tightly to our press ID cards for any eventuality. Saying it could protect us from a stray bullet. We wondered what would happen to us if rebel troops suddenly burst into the room where we were hiding.

And other what seemed like a lifetime in the dark, a civilian appeared before us with a message from Col. Gregorio Honasan of the PIO. The men was repaid us to member building Camp Aguinaldo. We were assigned. We ran, crawled, ducked, slithered past several buildings. We found Vendaluz and the other reporters gathered around a vat of gas. I went to see and Beth who was already making us hard and eaten a roasted cone "pinoy-mite," that is, before the rebels declared war on the Aquino administration.

Body count

That was to be temporarily. In the succeeding days, the battle ground shifted to Makati, which was overrun by notorious troops who imposed a curfew and killed everyone, including the media, who dared disobey their orders.

The night-after post had its "body count." I finally saw it at the hospital near Camp Aguinaldo. But then "body counts" can spring one's many surprises, pleasant and unpleasant.

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DNA testing needed to ID man's badly mangled body

From page A1

would mind that the body was another Rodel L," the media-legal report said in the case filed before Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of Quezon City Regional Trial Court branch 221.

Cabrera said Rodeo appeared to favor been shot 12 times. He said four of the wounds, found on the right side of the victim's body and the back, were fatal.

Another media worker, Arturo Benin of Remidio Inc, also suffered 12 gunshot wounds, of which five were fatal.

Cabrera said one of the first wounds was located behind the left ear.

"The fractured part of the bone of his skull bounced to his brain. The fracture would have caused severe pain and bleeding. The laceration of the brain would have killed him instantaneously," Cabrera said.

He said that the bullet's trajectory was "downward," and that the gunmen was possibly behind Berbis.

Mallari and Berbis were two of the 57 civilians killed on Nov. 23, 2009, in Ampatuan, Maguindanao. There is a reported 58th victim but his remains have yet to be found. Of the number, at least 30 were media workers.

Not like Vizconde case

Mallari's mother, Gerbertson, tearfully told reporters during a recess in the hearing that she could not bear to look at the photographs and video footage of the slain son's body.

"I have to will all and not say anything somehow), but not in this way that my son died," she said.

Catherine Mallari urged reporters to continue monitoring the case so the public would know why "the brutality done to my son."

She also said she was confident that the Maguindanao massacre case would not go the way of the 1991 Vizconde massacre, of which Hubert Webb and six others were recently acquitted by the Supreme Court.

"I know this will not be like the Vizconde massacre. There are too many pieces of evidence and they cannot pay us," the mother said.

Cabrera said one of the first wounds appeared to have damaged Mallari's spinal cord.

He said that such a wound would cause paralysis of the lower limbs, and that if Mallari were home inflicted while Berbis was lying face down on the ground.

In Berbis' case, Cabrera testified that another fatal wound was found on the left chest. He said the bullet traversed Berbis's second and fourth ribs and also lacerated the left lung.

"This would have led to the collapse of the said lung and severe pain," Cabrera said.

Last for 2010

Yesterday's hearing was the last scheduled for the year.

Judge Reyes told reporters on Wednesday that she would try to continue holding hearings twice a week in January.

"I am open to continue the persons schedule, but the court needs more recognition," she said.

A strongly-worded motion a verbatim record of legal proceedings using shorthand or voice-recording but the pilot refused.

At present, there are four regular stenographers assisting her in the Maguindanao massacre case and the regular court.

She has no objection to the proposed live coverage of the hearings.

"It's up to the Supreme Court to decide. I'll just abide by (the decision)," she said.

Reyes is also considering to the request of both the prosecution and the defense. Judge Reyes had conducted seven weekly hearings on the Maguindanao massacre case.

Before then, the hearings were conducted every Wednesday only.

With 197 accused and 300 witnesses, the trial is expected to drag on for years.

Andal Ampatuan Jr. and other members of the politically powerful Ampatuan clan of Maguindanao are charged with 57 counts of murder.

Judge Reyes has set on Jan. 20 until June the arraignment of seven of the accused—Datumanong Ampatuan, Tess Boquilaton, Akib Sakan Boquilaton, Anwarbin Tampuyan, Macoy Ampatuan, Nasser Mangudadatu and Samsudin Dimaf.

Zaldy's denial

Former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan, a brother of Andal Ampatuan Jr., has denied that he acted to bribe Maguindanao Vice Governor Lintang Mangudadatu into dropping the case against him.

His lawyers, Harvard College said Mangudadatu's allegation was "baseless" and "self-serving" because the former ARMM governor had previously been found probable cause to drop the charges against Zaldy Ampatuan.

Government witness Lakmudin Sakan had earlier testified in court that Zaldy Ampatuan participated in the planning of the massacre.

The former ARMM governor has appealed for inclusion in the charge sheet of the case and have to be escaped because indictment. Within a report from Jimmy C. Tarrazal

Facebook founder crowned Time's 'Person of the Year'

From page A1

ed Eguia, a Silicon Valley man-dermal handler usually is three to look circles.

But this year, Zuckerberg has been Hazel into pop culture allegory appearing on screens of all shapes and sizes. Even "Oprah" is one of the year's most acclaimed films.

He's the youngest doctor to the honor since the famous duo Lindbergh in 1927.

In a posting—what's else?—on his Facebook page, Zuckerberg said being named Time's "Person of the Year" was "a real honor and recognition of how one little room a building something that hundreds of millions of people want to use to make the world more open and connected. I'm happy to be a part of that."

He changed all our lives

It's not a remarkable year for Zuckerberg and Facebook, which has more than 500 million users worldwide and more, but even more that go into those hundred million.

In countless colleges and new startups, Facebook has been putting toward becoming not just a social media hangout, but also the underlying, connecting fabric of the Internet.

Time, which made the award to choose the news-making Wikileaks founder Assange for the second, cited Zuckerberg "for changing how we all live our lives."

"I'm trying to make the world more open and open place," Zuckerberg says in the "Social Network," David Fincher and movie's director's cinematic drama of the communication creation of Facebook, has supplied a movie that in some ways is outdated to Zuckerberg and Facebook.

The Film depicts Zuckerberg (played by Jesse Eisenberg) as a brilliant, person-hungry tech-enabling hacker motivated by social acceptance and gets Facebook has called the film "pulpy fiction more than [which] Zuckerberg himself in an Inc. article from.

The New York Film Critics Circle, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and the National Board of Review have all picked "The Social Network" as the best film of the year.

On Tuesday, the film received six Golden Globe nominations, including best picture, drama, going up against its chief rival, the British monarchy tale "The King's Speech," which led with seven nominations.

$100-M donation

Zuckerberg countered the release of the film with a $100-million donation to Newark, the town in the Newark, New Jersey school system. He appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" to announce the donation. Ahead of the release of "The Social Network," Forbes defended the money's memory.

"They have no idea and not yet anything in the movie that's been formulated," Forbes said. "They've dribbled enough the snippets a little bit so that he was drinking a Manhattan when he was really drinking an martini, and that kind of thing. But they're not going to be able to. The movie's true."

For Zuckerberg, though, the film turned out to be less something to live down to avoid as. He even took the whole controversy in stride. Around Halloween, "saying success them to for the occasion.

Zuckerberg, the son of a computer observed dentist, has built Facebook from a dorm room conversion to Harvard into the leading social networking site in the world.

At it grew, he steadily turned down offers from companies like Yahoo and Microsoft, and has so far declined to take Facebook public. Asked about it in an interview with Business Zuckerberg said, "Maybe."

"A lot of people who I think build startups or companies think that selling the company or going public is the end-point," he said. "It's like you run what you go public, and that's just not how I see it."

Not everyone agrees

Not everyone sees Facebook's rise as a good thing. Some question the depth of its social interaction, and many have expressed concern over its attitudes about privacy. Facebook has continually urged users to share more personal information, often prompting criticism from privacy groups and users.

Zuckerberg, now a celebrity himself and one of the world's youngest billionaires, sees Facebook as a universal identity connection could challenge Google and even e-mail for the basis of Internet communication.

But although Zuckerberg runs and ostensibly a huge presence in 2010, the choice was quickly assailed by some online critics as a political decision to ignore damage-release WikiLeaks saw has caused an uproar by revealing to the public what governments around the world would like to think in private. Reports from AFP and AP

SC junks suit against Mikey A

From page A1

and takes his oath of office as a member of the House of Representatives," the court said until its the decision penned by Associate Justice Arturo Brion.

"[We] hold that the court has no jurisdiction over the present petitions and that the HRET now has the exclusive original jurisdiction to hear and rule upon herein respondent Arroyo's membership in the House of Representatives," the tribunal added.

Justice Antonio Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. was on official leave when the decision was promulgated.

In a press briefing yesterday, Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said: "The issue used the jurisdictional will as final once a member of the House of Representatives has been proclaimed. Comelec/Commission on Elections] loses jurisdiction and goes to the HRET."

Case not dismissed

Marquez said that "law always bears the rule. It doesn't necessarily mean that the case has already been dismissed (by the Supreme Court). The decision says it said that there are pending cases in the HRET. So let the HRET decide."

The court has consolidated the petitions filed by defeatist Rep. Melchor Belis and former Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza, former Nueva Ecija Rep. Rufus Duavit and Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro "Teddy" Casiño.

They will question Arroyo's qualifications as respondent of the AGP which represents the group of security guards and bicycle drivers.

See What Went Before on this page.

In its reply, Arroyo told the court that the petitions should be dismissed "outright" because issues on his qualification to be a party-list representative were already under HRET jurisdiction.

In their petition, Belis and Rosales argued that the Comelec "committed grave abuse of discretion" when it failed to disqualify the AGP while the petitions of Maza, Ocampo and Casiño said that the Comelec "gravely abused its discretion in failing to disqualify Arroyo as AGP's nominee."

WHAT WENT BEFORE

ON MARCH 15, then Bayan Muna Representatives Rafael Dutiaga and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza asked the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to disqualify Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo as the first nominee of Ang Galing Pinoy (AGP), a party-list group representing security guards and bicycle drivers.

Ocampo and Maza contended that Arroyo could not be considered belonging to the marginalized sector because he had a reported net worth of P900 million in 2008 (P681.3 million in of 2009), and also wielded political power, being then an incumbent second-term congressman and a son of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"How can he, a member of the First Family, represent security drivers and security guards?" Ocampo and Maza said.

Arroyo said there were only two requirements governing party-list representatives—that the sector one intended to represent was truly marginalized, and that one was a true advocate for the sector's issues, interests and goals. He claimed to fulfill both.

On May 8, the Comelec second division dismissed the petitions of Ocampo and Maza. The two filed a motion for reconsideration. AGP was eventually proclaimed a winning party-list group. On June 22, the Comelec released the names of the several nominees who will seat in the House. The list excluded Arroyo because of the motion then still pending on the poll body.

On July 20, the Comelec voted 4-2-1 to allow Arroyo to represent AGP in the House.

A week later, Bayan Muna asked the Supreme Court to reverse the Comelec decision. At the House of Representatives, Biraa Hontiveros, a former representative of Akbayan, another party-list group, challenged Arroyo's legitimacy as a lawmaker in the House's Electoral Tribunal (HRET), saying he had failed to submit the documents required to prove that he belonged to the marginalized sector or organization that he sought to represent.

On July 26, tricycle driver Dominic Antipuesto, backed by Bayan Muna, sought the seizure of seven AGP nominees in the HRET, and also asked the body to disqualify the AGP itself for being bogus.

The Philippine Association of Detective and Protective Agency Operations Inc., the country's sole umbrella group of watchmen and security agencies, also denied Arroyo's claim that he serves constituents with the group before running under AGP.

However, AGP founder Armand Gorilla insisted in August that Arroyo, although a rich businessman, was qualified to join the group and to represent it in Congress.

He said Arroyo joined the party in 2007, representing its Pampanga chapter, and became active in 2009. *Inquirer Research*

Source: Inquirer Archives

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MMDA hikes fines for stalled vehicles

DAWN MASS Churchgoers flock to the Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy in Novaliches, Quezon City for the first day of the traditional "Simbang Gabi." PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

By Tina G. Santos

THE METRO Manila Council (MMC), the policy-making body of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), has approved a resolution raising the penalty for stalled vehicles from P200 to a maximum of P3,000.

MMDA Regulation No. 96-003, which was passed on Tuesday, provides guidelines on the towing of stalled or illegally parked vehicles in Metro Manila's major thoroughfares. It is expected to take effect soon.

MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino said they decided to increase the penalty to force private motorists and operators of public utility vehicles (PUVs) to keep their vehicles in good running condition.

Right now, PUV operators or owners of private vehicles would be fined P200 should their cars stall on major roads. Drivers charged with illegal parking, on the other hand, would face a fine of P150.

But during the MMC meeting held at the Mandaluyong City Hall on Tuesday, Mayor Lito Atienza of Manila said he agreed that the P200 fine for light vehicles should be hiked to P1,500. The metro mayor also

Judge drops ABS-CBN-Revillame case

METROBRIEFS

Condo robbers nabbed

TWEET people who allegedly robbed a condominium unit in Pasay City over the weekend and carted away P10 million worth of cash and valuables have been arrested by authorities. Chief Insp. Raymund Ligsalao, chief of the Pasay Police station investigation and Detective Management section, said they first arrested Ryan Francisco when police responded to his callers. Police said Francisco was arrested at around 4:20 a.m. on Wednesday as he was pushing his Honda Civic (TBW 297) inside the compound of a condominium along Arnaiz Avenue in Pasay. His alleged cohorts, Lucito Mabilog and Rosalie Dimaala, were arrested in follow-up operations. Investigators suspect Francisco's ex-wife's expensive perfumes and liquors which the police believed were stolen from Unit 1416 of Tower C, Asian Spa Silver Tower Condominium on Roxas Boulevard. The unit was owned by Olivia Villanueva and his wife.

Tina G. Santos

Fountain renovated

THE NAYONAL Parks Development Committee (NPDC) and the Manila City will soon unveil the renewed attraction at Rizal Park.

The Children's Lagoon Musical Dancing fountain is expected to be more majestic to the park, NPDC executive director Jose Villegas said. She added that water jets and lights have been installed to liven up the central lagoon fountain behind the monument of national hero Jose Rizal. This is more so 88-foot- high center jet, a peacock water spray screen and a synchronized colorful dancing fountain accompanied by blasts of music. The central lagoon fountain at the park was originally designed and built in 1968 by German national William Schaare.

Jeannette I. Andrade

By John M. Aurelio

FOLLOWING allegations of bias and impartiality, a Quezon City judge has decided to voluntary inhibit himself from the case TV host Willie Revillame filed against his former employer, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

In an order issued on Dec. 13, Judge Lourdes Cuevas of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 84 granted the TV network's urgent motion that he inhibit himself from the case.

Revillame, who used to host "Wowowee" on ABS-CBN, had filed a P11-million suit against his former employer in which he asked the court to make a judicial confirmation of the end of his contract with the TV network.

ABS-CBN responded by lodging a P426 million civil case against Revillame, now a satyan of TV5, for reneging on his contract with the network which was supposed to expire in 2011.

ABS-CBN, however, asked the judge to inhibit himself from the case after Cuevas asked their petition for him to stop the airing of Revillame's new show on TV5.

But as the same time, Cuevas ordered Revillame to pay a P426 million bond, representing the damages being sought by his former employers, or prevent him from doing anything that may damage the network.

Mistaken, astounded

In his order, Cuevas said that even though ABS-CBN's perception [that he was biased] was "mistaken and unfounded," he decided to grant the motion lest the network lose faith in the judicial system.

"While the defendant's (ABS-CBN) perception of partiality or bias is mistaken and unfounded and should be considered a mere figment of their wild imagination, we the court cannot close its eyes to the fact that they have lost their faith that this presiding judge can fairly and justly impartiality decide the case or resolve its pending incidents."

The TV network earlier alleged that Cuevas had prejudged the case in favor of Revillame and that he would be unable to resolve the case objectively.

It also claimed that Cuevas would be "unable to remain neutral and impartial but [would] be easily swayed by the barrage of publicity for Revillame."

In his decision, the judge said he was mindful of the fact that each party in every case was entitled to a neutral judge "who not only appears to be neutral but must be perceived to be impartial."

Following the decision, the judge ordered the transfer of the records of the case to the Office of the Clerk of Court for its re-raffling to another trial court.

Primordial concern

"The faith in the judicial system is the paramount and primordial concern of the court in order that such faith in the system must be adhered [to] at all times," Cuevas said in his order.

He also added that he had examined himself and felt that it would better should he inhibit himself from the case.

"... it would best for the undersigned to voluntary inhibit himself in order for either party to regain their faith in the judicial system of fair and impartial trial and to totally eradicate or dispense such wrong notions," he said.

Cuevas added that his decision was also made in the interest of fair play.

Boy dies after drinking silver cleaner solution

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A TWO YEAR-OLD boy died in a Manila hospital late Wednesday afternoon several hours after accidentally ingesting a silver cleaner solution.

Mamir Basaat, of Cruzada, Sucat, Muntinlupa City, was pronounced dead at around 3:30 p.m. by doctors at Mary Johnston Hospital, where he was rushed by his parents Mario Basaat and Mary Ann Andaya.

The couple entered an affidavit vowing an autopsy and an investigation into the death of their son.

Senior Police Officer 2 Henry Ignacio, of the Manila Police District (MPD) homicide section, said his office initially received information on the boy's death at around 1 pm from the hospital.

Ignacio said that according to the parents' statement, they were buying goods from a store selling silver jewelry staff along Dapa Street in Tondo, with their son when the boy got hold of a glass on the counter containing a solution for cleaning silver, apparently mistaking it for water.

An accident

Upon discovering that the boy had accidentally ingested the poisonous substance, his parents immediately brought him to the nearest hospital for treatment.

Ignacio said the parents chose to waive an investigation, claiming that they could not remember the staff where their son got the silver cleaner nor could they identify its owner.

Warning

The Department of Health as well as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had earlier issued a joint advisory on the sale of cyanide-based silver cleaners.

The advisory reminded importers, retailers and other store material establishments on the penalties following the sale or distribution of the substance, particularly "unregistered and unlabeled silver cleaners."

It was issued to prevent cases of accidental poisoning or deaths due to ingestion of the substance.

Based on data from the Poison Control Coalition, three adults and eight children out of 231 cases of silver cleaning poisoning brought to the Philippine General Hospital died in 2009.

From January to September this year, 11 persons have died after drinking the substances, according to the same study.

DID YOU KNOW

STUDENTS at the University of the Philippines have been complaining that the UP Lantern Parade since 1922 had been set until 1934 that then-UP President Jorge C. Bocobo established the practice as "a hilarious activity" and a fitting way to end classes before Christmas.

Schools Christmas Parties

DPWH: Pipe damage not from flyover

By Jerome Aning

THE DAMAGE suffered by the pipeline owned and operated by First Philippine Industrial Corp. (FPIC) in Barangay Sangitan, Meycauayan City, was not caused by the Mapolitan interchange, according to a study conducted by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

In a statement issued yesterday, the DPWH said the damaged portion of the pipe was five meters away from the retaining wall of the ramp of the flyover.

"In the conclusion of [DPWH] design experts, the weight of the wall and the vibration [caused] by passing vehicles have very little effect [on the pipeline due to its distance from the wall," it added.

Moreover, the damage sustained by the pipeline consisted of small holes and not cracks, the study said.

"Based on DPWH assessment, if the areas induced on the pipe by the structure will exceeded the retaining capacity of the pipe, the eventual damage that may be caused is the formation of cracks but not holes," it said.

The pipeline was shut down in October after five holes the size of tea grains were found in a portion of the structure near West Tower condominium.

Since July, oil had been seeping into the basement of the building, prompting the Makati City government to close it down to prevent a possible explosion.

The pipeline transports fuel products from Batangas province to the Pandacan oil depot in Manila.

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Kosovo PM tagged as crime boss

PARIS—A two-year international inquiry has concluded that the prime minister of Kosovo led a clan of criminal entrepreneurs whose activities included trafficking in organs extracted from Serbian prisoners executed during the Kosovo conflict in 1999.

The inquiry, prepared for the Council of Europe, names the prime minister, Hashim Thaci, as the boss of the Drenica Group, an organized crime network that flourished in Kosovo and Albania after the war and exerted control over numerous markets, including the heroin trade, and six-seven dimension control in Albania, some used is a black market in human organs.

Kosovo denounced the findings of the inquiry, which began its task late on Tuesday, ahead of the official release on Thursday. One official called the report slanderous and timed to harm Thaci, whose party recently won the first parliamentary election in Kosovo since it declared independence from Serbia.

The report did not explicitly describe any role of Thaci in the organ trafficking network.

The Council of Europe said the investigating team that gathered evidence used foreign intelligence analysts, international organizations, former fighters, logistics operatives and victims. The report cites some names but withholds others, saying local witnesses feared for their lives.

The roots of the network date from 1999 as the Kosovo conflict was ending. Over time, the ring established ties in "a broader, more complex organized criminal conspiracy" that operated in three other countries and endured for more than a decade, according to the report. The report was prepared by Dick Marty, a Swiss senator who had previously investigated allegations that the Central Intelligence Agency abducted and imprisoned terrorists suspects in Europe.

Marty, reached by telephone, declined to discuss the report or Thaci's role until he presented the report on Thursday to the legal affairs committee of the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly in Paris.

The allegations of organ trafficking are reportedly the basis of a trial in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo. An EU prosecutor, Jonathan Rand, delivered his opening argument on Tuesday against seven men, including Kurradi, Kosovar and Turkish citizens, accused of recruiting 20 people from impoverished regions with false promises of payments for their kidneys. The kidneys, in turn, were sold for excessive sums to patients from Canada, Germany, Israel and Poland. It was not clear whether, or how, the charges were connected in the cases in the report.

The Council of Europe, which is separate from the European Union, is responsible for the European Court of Human Rights.

The report names Thaci, 42, who was the political leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army or KLA, was initially commissioned in response to allegations about organ trafficking in 2008 made early by Carla Del Ponte, who had been chief prosecutor of the United Nations war crimes tribunal dealing with the former Yugoslavia.

The Council of Europe report noted that investigators for the United Nations tribunal in 2004 went to the Serbian House, a nondescript location in Albania, but later destroyed some of the collected evidence, which included syringes and traces of blood. The tribunal contends that it did not find enough evidence to rail any of its cases.

"The international arrest chose to turn a blind eye to the war crimes of the KLA, playing a provision instead on achieving some degree of short-term stability," Marty wrote.

The report included testimony of people who provided logistics for the KLA, including injuries in ambushes it was between a series of wire stations in Albania.

The trafficking, according to the report, evolved over time and relied on detention centers spread through Albania that were controlled by the Kosovo Liberation Army. Initially the captives were both prisoners, but the ring also kidnapped ethnic Albanians in exile old scores, the report said. *New York Times News Service*

HASHIM Thaci AP/FILE

Iran suicide bombings kill 39 outside mosque

TEHRAN—Two suicide bomb attacks outside a mosque killed 39 people and wounded more than 100 during a Shi'ite religious ceremony in the southeastern Iranian city of Chabahar on Wednesday, local media reported.

Jundollah, a Sunni Muslim rebel group, claimed responsibility on its website for the bombings outside the Imam Hussein Mosque in Chabahar, near Iran's border with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The pace previous of Sistan-Baluchistan has been the scene of unrest with the mainly Sunni population claiming discrimination by the Shi'ite authorities.

"At least 39 people were martyred after two suicide bombings targeted Shi'ite mourners in front of a mosque in the town of Chabahar," Herbert Ayati Firouzabadi, head of the Governor's office in the province.

The bombings killed many children and women, who attended a Shi'ite religious ceremony to commemorate the death of Prophet Mohammad's grandson Hussein, state television reported, adding that the death toll was expected to increase.

Iran's Interior Minister Mostafa Mohammad-Najjar told state television the attackers had links to neighboring Pakistan and that an investigation was underway.

"A group of terrorists who were trained in Pakistan carried out the bombings... We have (evidence) Pakistani officials as well," he said.

Jundollah meanwhile said the attack was in retaliation for the execution of its leader Abdolmalek Rigi in June.

"This operation was in revenge for the execution of the leader of the movement Abdolmalek (Rigi) and other martyrs of Jundollah who were savagely hanged," the group said on its website. *Reuters*

WORLD BRIEFS

Kenya leaders named suspects in vote violence

NAIROBI, KENYA—The International Criminal Court on Monday named six Kenyan leaders as suspects behind the machete, gunfire and bow-and-arrow attacks that followed Kenya's 2007 presidential vote. Residents rejoiced at the first sign of justice for the deaths of 1,000 people. The president urged calm and security forces were on high alert, knowing that Wednesday's announcement by prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo runs the risk of igniting another round of tribal warfare. The son of Kenya's founding father—the current deputy prime minister—was among those named. Ocampo said Uhuru Kenyatta's ethnic organization mobilized William Ruto, whose Kalenjin tribe in the volatile Rift Valley is a possible source of new violence. Moreno-Ocampo wants the ICC to charge the six with crimes against humanity including murder, rape and torture. *AP*

UN Council removes restrictions placed on Iraq

UNITED NATIONS—The United States, laying to rest once and for all the accusations of Iraqi arms down, pushed through the UN Security Council resolution on Wednesday that lifted restrictions left over from the confrontation with Saddam Hussein. One resolution permits Iraq to develop a civilian nuclear program and import materials once banned because they could possibly be used to help develop unconventional weapons. A second resolution formally shuttered the dormant, widely corrupt oil-for-food program. And the third gives the country control of over most of its oil wealth starting July 1, 2011, while simultaneously lifting the protections that shielded post-invasion Iraq from countless legal claims. "After years of being overlooked by Security Council resolutions due to the aggression, the belligerence of Saddam's regime, I think today we closed a dark chapter," said Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Iraq's foreign minister. "I think this shows that Iraq is coming back truly to its rightful place among the community of nations." *New York Times News Service*

US missile-defense test fails over Pacific

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, California—A test of the nation's missile defense against long-range ballistic missiles failed on Wednesday, the second failure in a row involving the system managed by Boeing Co. the Defense Department said. "The Missile Defense Agency was unable to achieve a planned intercept of a ballistic missile target during a test over the Pacific Ocean today," Richard Lehner, an agency spokesman, said. The miss brought the so-called ground-based midcourse defense's batting record to eight intercepts out of 15 tries, as indicated by the Missile Defense Agency. "This is a tremendous setback for the testing of this complicated system," Riki Ellison, head of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, a booster group, said in a statement. He said it raised troubling questions about the reliability of the 30 or so interceptor missiles deployed in silos in Alaska and California. *AP*

US shooter's wife says husband 'misunderstood'

HAVANA CITY, Florida—The wife of the man who held a Florida school board at gunpoint said on Wednesday that her husband was a gentle guy and who was pushed over the edge by the economy and feels bad over her losing her teaching job. "He wanted to get me an answer," Rebecca Duke said a day after her husband, Clay Duke, killed himself. He shot at school board members in Panama City, missing some of them by mere centimeters, before he exchanged gunfire with a security guard. As he lay on the floor in the boardroom, he shot himself to death in the head. *AP*

Flying V Chairman, Mr. Ramon Villavicencio believes in giving people more value for their money, hence, the Loyalty System

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"Our company developed this rewards card concept in order to acknowledge the loyalty of our customers to our brand," said Chairman Ramon Villavicencio of Flying V. It's a first-of-its-kind rewards program in the industry, another indication of Flying V's push for innovation on all fronts.

In order to maintain strong customer relationships, Flying V leans on PLDT SME Nation's SWUP – a POS (Point of Sale) machine that automatically records all reward points for each customer's V Card Plus. With just one swipe, SWUP can read and record data saved on each customer's card, giving Flying V the ease of access with every swipe.

With the V Card Plus, customers are given a new purchasing power. What makes the V-Card Plus more attractive is that customers can avail it without paying any membership fee. All they need to do is present their single or accumulated receipts worth Php 1500 of any Flying V products and they are able to get a card. "It was really meant to provide our customers with even more convenience and also to make them feel valued," Chairman Villavicencio said.

The V Card should be presented for each transaction in order to get a point for every purchase of Flying V merchandise. Initially available in 110 Flying V stations nationwide, the Loyalty Rewards Program will undoubtedly attract a legion of loyal and new Flying V customers.

Flying V has a variety of exciting and premium item rewards for all the points every customer earns. These rewards can be redeemed from any participating Flying V station. "I personally would like to encourage everybody to be part of this program, because we are doing this to satisfy our customers. If you want to get more value for money, this is the Loyalty Rewards Program for you," Chairman Villavicencio said.

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozco

US sues BP, 8 others over Gulf oil spill

THE US DEPARTMENT of Justice filed a civil lawsuit on Wednesday in New Orleans against the oil giant BP and eight other companies over the environmental oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Although the complaint does not specify the damages that the administration is seeking, the fines and penalties under the laws that are cited in the complaint could reach into the tens of billions of dollars.

"We will not hesitate to take whatever steps are necessary to hold accountable those who are responsible for this spill," Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. said at a news conference.

Holder said the department is "making progress" on a criminal investigation of the companies involved in the spill.

The Democratic Obama cabinet official said each of April, killing 11 workers and leaving the well it was drilling to gush out of control on the gulf floor. Millions of gallons of crude oil spilled before the well was capped in July.

The government is alleging violations of federal regulations concerning the operation and safety of oil rigs, including the failure to take necessary precautions in securing the rig before the explosion and the failure to use the safest drilling technology available.

The nine defendants include BP and its partners in running the well, Anadarko Petroleum and MOEX Offshore 2007, as well as BP's operating partners, including Transocean, the owner of the rig, and Halliburton. The 27-page complaint was filed in the US District Court in New Orleans, where thousands of spill lawsuits have been consolidated.

A leader of the group of plaintiffs' lawyers in the case, James Roy, welcomed the lawsuit but urged, saying, "We look forward to continued cooperation with the US government in pursuit of justice for all victims of the Deepwater Horizon tragedy."

Halliburton, the contractor for the cement work on the well, was not named as a defendant, but Holder said the complaint could be amended later. The complaint specifically cites followers of contracting as a factor that contributed to the spill.

David M. Uhlmann, a law professor at the University of Michigan, said the filing had been expected. "The only question," he said, "was how; when, not if, a civil suit would be filed."

Uhlmann, who led the environmental crimes section of the Justice Department during the George W. Bush administration, called the filing "the opening salvo in the government's response to the gulf oil spill." Although the suit could subject BP and the other companies to billions of dollars in civil penalties and natural resource damage claims, he said the next act could be even more dramatic: a criminal case, he said, would "bring the most significant penalties and provide the most meaningful accountability for this tragedy." New York Times News Service

Celtics eke out close win

MEN'S VOW—Kevin Goodrich (center) is among three rookies in the roster not ruled out by a veteran today, giving the Rubix Cubics a 7:30 tip-off time with Barangay Ginebra on Wednesday, Dec 15 straight. Mid-air, Elmo recalls. Mavericks 113, Blazers 90: Sporti 02, Banks 00, Lubos 128, Pacers 04, Heat 109, Cavaliers 00, Bulls 110, Raptors 00 Lakers 113, Bobcats 80 Knicks 98, Kings 91, Spurs 130, Timbers 122, Nets 106, Clippers 91

SPORTS

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Bacolod match still possible

By Cashell P. Tapus

JAKARTA—The Philippines will not only be seeking a maiden title appearance in the Asean Football Federation Suzuki Cup, but also the rare opportunity of bringing the second leg of the finals home.

If they overcome the seasonal dust odds and beat Indonesia here, the Filipino hosters could play the second leg of the finals at the Panaad Stadium in Bacolod City...as long as it meets the standards of the AFF and its marketing arm for the tournament, Mitsubishi Space Gear.

"There is enough time if you make it," said AFF competitions chair Bety Bhek yesterday, after getting an assurance from Philippine Olympic Committee chairman and former Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella that Panaad will be ready to host the Filipinos' advance to the finals.

The second leg of the finals is scheduled on Dec. 29.

Despite hosting several big international events like the 2005 Southeast Asian Games and the AFF Qualifying Tournament in 2006, Panaad failed to pass the standards in time to host a leg in the semifinals.

The lack of time to prepare the Panaad had an earlier approval by Fifa-recognized Philippine Football Federation head Jose Mari Martinez of an away-and-away semifinal pairings the AFF arrange the games in Indonesia, Bhek said.

"Time was just short," said Bhek.

As a result, the Filipinos will be playing both semifinal legs at the Gelora Bung Karno Stadium here, which can turn 500,000.

Bhek clarified that the seating capacity is no longer an issue for the AFF. Instead, the AFF and MSG are prioritizing security, lighting, and the capability of staging a live broadcast of the game here/Jakarta.

"The Philippines deserves to host because football is now popular in this country," he said.

Panaad has just 500 fluorescent lights, well below the 1,000 minimum requirement set by AFF.

But Puentevella said that can easily be addressed by adding the lights of nearby Pagbuan Stadium in Bacolod.

"I HOPE the AFF will prepare the venue and demand them to use less the finals if we get lucky," Puentevella said.

Puentevella has also broached the possibility of the Philippines hosting one of the group stages of the tournament in 2012, a proposal that drew a positive response from Bhek.

"The Philippines has a strong chance to be the host because we (AFF) always give everyone a chance and, I think in the next two years for sure we will consider it," Bhek said. "We don't require a big football stadium."

Aware of the leadership problem within the PFF, Bhek said he has ordered all international matters related to the hosting to all factions, including interim PFF president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta, who was elected during a recent PFF congress after Martinez was removed.

"To achieve such (an Cup hosting) a big event, you have to get in touch with all people. I don't think PFF by itself can do it," said Bhek. "The interest of the many should take over the interest of a few."

Meanwhile, the Indonesian Soccer Association (PSSI) still not share ticket revenues with the Philippines as host of the second semifinal leg of the Suzuki Cup.

The Jakarta Post quoted PSSI chair Nurdin Halid as saying they will not share the profits from ticket sales because "the responsibility of organizing the match is in the hands of the Indonesian team."

"Because [they've] chosen to play in Indonesia, then all expenses will be covered by Indonesia and all profits from ticket sales will go to Indonesia," Halid said.

The Philippines failed to host the opening game in the home-and-away format due to the lack of a facility that meets the standards of the AFF.

Martinez had announced he would distribute as much as 50 percent of the Philippines' share of the net income from the tournament's proceeds to the players.

The Jakarta Post said the PSSI previously agreed to pay for the Philippine team's transportation and accommodation during its stay in Indonesia from Dec. 14 to 29, and might also pay the Filipino players' daily allowance.

Asian bobsled hopeful Philippine coach Simon McMenamy said they "will try to make it very, very difficult for the Indonesian teammates."

The British coach said the Philippine team was on the rise thanks to a massive growth of public interest in the sport. With a report from Bonnie Anthony Aytin

PHILIPPINE team members stand at attention as the country's flag is being raised. The Philippines could now still being played at premises. —

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Que fires 65, ties for Thailand lead

HUA HIN, THAILAND—Asian Tour rookie Angelo Que of the Philippines made a welcome return to form with a 7-under par 65 to share the first-round lead with Japan's Tetsuji Hiratsuka and Daisuke Maruyama at the $900,000 Black Mountain Masters on Thursday.

Que brilliantly fired two eagles, four birdies and a lone bogey at the magnificent Black Mountain Golf Club in the Asian Tour's curtain finale.

Asia Pegasus had a chance to give the Philippines another solid challenger but a triple bogey on the par-5 10th left him with a 72, two strokes behind Hiratsuka and Maruyama (70).

Crowdpleasing Gerald Rosales carded a 73, Joe Barron posted a 74 and Mars Pauig had a 78 that included a triple bogey on the par-4 No. 6. Mikhael Sibayan was last among the Filipinos with a 76.

South Korea's Lee Sang-hee shot a 66 to share third place with Australian Chapchai Nirat, countrymate Richarlson Wadhana, India's Himmat Rai, England's Simon Griffiths and Americo Anthony Kang.

Three-time Order of Merit winner Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand, fresh off a victory in Cambodia on Sunday, carded a 68 to trail by three shots, while defending champ Johan Edfors of Sweden mustered a 74.

"The two eagles helped," said Que. "I hit a solid 6-iron on the par-five 15th and holed a 20-footer. I also holed my bunker shot on 16th (for an eagle). I was a bit lucky."

A bogey on his last hole didn't dampen Que's mood.

"Normally, if I shoot seven under with a bogey on the last, I'll be so upset and depressed. But you know what, I still shot seven under. It's just a bogey."

—Asian Tour News

ANGELO Que hits his drive on the 18th hole. —AsianTour.com

PBA playoffs on; Kings face Aces

By Manny K. Castillo

TOYOTA CALIRAY HEARD – Barangay Ginebra could not stop Alaska from booking a Game 1 of finals berth of Saturday's quarterfinal series in the PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

And Ginebra coach Jong Uichico knows that they drew the Aces at a most dangerous time, unlike a month ago when Alaska was struggling to compete.

"We owe it to ourselves," Uichico said after relinquishing an 11-point lead in the fourth quarter but still managed to win, 103-101.

Uichico said he was pleased with the way his players executed their game plan against the Aces.

"We're happy that we were able to execute our game plan," he said

Asistio, Salvador pace Open

By Mikang R. Castillo

ANTIPOLO—Rookie pro Antonio Asistio, two weeks removed from a celebrated collegiate rehab clearing his first win, put himself in contention again yesterday.

And Elmer Salvador, the hotcake defending champion, kept his foes on a leg piece of Philippine Open history.

Asistio fired the Antiphoto 4-under-par 68 yesterday and Salvador retreated a second straight 69 to share a one-stroke lead over Orlino Samuel halfway through the 94th edition of Asia's oldest national championship at Valley's two-lined South course here.

The 21-year-old Asistio, who threw away a three-stroke lead in the final round at Guadalupe, planned down five birdies against a relatively even bogey on Nos. 15 (5) to 18 (4) for aggregate of 138.

Salvador, trying to become the first man since the late, great Celestino Tigas in 1950 to repeat as Open champion, bounced back from a second-hole bogey with four birdies, the last coming on No. 17, to secure sole title the lead.

A long-hitting journeyman regarded as long overdue for a win, Salvador added a double bogey-marred 71 to his overnight for 139.

Longtime rivals and former champions Frankie Minoza and Robert Sinfuego slipped out of the lead with the US Champions Tour-bound Minoza salvaging a 73 behind four birdies on the last five holes for 141, three off the pace.

Bedridden the lately 1998 winner at Wack Wack, had a disastrous two-hole stretch to his back nine for a 71 that dropped him five shots behind at 143, even as Rodtan Bayona rebounded a 71 for 140.

"I knew I was going to play well. That's why I was excited coming into that tournament," said Asistio. "I listened my lessons [in Guadalupe]."

"My confidence is high," Salvador said of Filipinos. "The key is to just hold it all together for the last two rounds and see where I end up."

Salvador entered the green and fished to one par from tee to feet on No. 2. But he recovered the stroke on the next hole, first birdie from 7, 11 and 17.

Miguel Tabuena, the silver medal winner in last month's Asian Games in Guangzhou, fired a 71 to join Mikoy's group that also included Richard Yu, Fargo and Pedro Acuna.

Fillmore, who started on the back nine, salvaged his round with a brilliant display of scoring coming in which kept him in the hunt for a third Open title.

Fast-fast double bogeyed No. 13 where he hit a bad drive, before dropping another shot on the next hole.

That left him in the last player with a sub-par score going into the weekend play which will have 36 pro and 14 amateurs after the cut was pegged at 150 (one with the rated playing) is predicted this in the first two rounds.

Top leading scores:

138—A. Asistio 68-68, A Acuña 70-68, O. Samuel 67+71, S.C. Jr. Quiroga 70-71, F. Minoza 68-73, R. Sinfuego 69-73, R. Bayona 70-71, E. Salvador 69-71, 70-69, M. Tabuena 71-67, R. Yu 70-68, P. Acuna 70-68, J. Fargo 70-68, R. Mikoy 70-68, A. Fillmore 70-68, 141—R. Minoza 73-68, E. Salvador 71-70, 142—A. Asistio 71-71, 143—A. Acuña 71-72, R. Bayona 72-71, J. Fargo 72-71, R. Mikoy 72-71, J. Fillmore 72-71, 144—A. Asistio 73-71, 145—A. Acuña 73-72, R. Bayona 73-72, J. Fargo 73-72, R. Mikoy 73-72, J. Fillmore 73-72, 146—A. Asistio 74-72, A. Acuña 74-72, R. Bayona 74-72, J. Fargo 74-72, R. Mikoy 74-72, J. Fillmore 74-72, 147—A. Asistio 75-72, A. Acuña 75-72, R. Bayona 75-72, J. Fargo 75-72, R. Mikoy 75-72, J. Fillmore 75-72, 148—A. Asistio 76-72, A. Acuña 76-72, R. Bayona 76-72, J. Fargo 76-72, R. Mikoy 76-72, J. Fillmore 76-72, 149—A. Asistio 77-72, A. Acuña 77-72, R. Bayona 77-72, J. Fargo 77-72, R. Mikoy 77-72, J. Fillmore 77-72, 150—A. Asistio 78-72, A. Acuña 78-72, R. Bayona 78-72, J. Fargo 78-72, R. Mikoy 78-72, J. Fillmore 78-72

Long shines as Blue Birds down Chinese

UBE (UBE) starred anew as the Philippine women's basketball Blue Birds stopped the Chinese club team UOC, 79-73, Wednesday for its second straight win in the 14th 3X3 Gold Super Slam Hennig Cup at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium in Hong Kong.

Long shone in the clutch to finish with 27 points, all but two coming in the second half.

Lester Alvarez heated a team-high 21 points to help the Blue Birds—a unit of collegiate players from three-time UAAP champion Ateneo Blue Eagles and the Adamson Soaring—virtually secure a semifinal berth.

Just a day earlier Long, an incentives guard from Ateneo, shone with 20 points in the Blue Birds' rout of Thailand, 80-61, at the start of the three-team tournament last Tuesday.

Ateneo coach Norman Black is calling the shots for the Blue Birds. Jeannine M. Pinpin

Will there be PBA playoffs surprises?

ONE GAME AT A TIME

By Sev Sarmenta

THE PBA, you know is the end of the classification phase of the PBA Philippine Cup here. Seven semifinalists and ten teams who survive, and have...

The question now is, will there be any surprises in the playoffs?

For teams that finished fifth to eighth will need a couple of surprises or problems to stun the first and deny the top four teams access to the finals.

■ **First, unleash an unforgiving defense.**

But, of course, in basketball you have to play well on both ends. Anyway, offenses fill play the defensive end to stop teams to surprise opponents or win important games.

The time has come for those teams that have to win two or win higher-ranked teams to play their best defensive basketball and not merely rely on the scoring touch against lesser-placed opponents.

The teams that have to Shine and Alaska will have to be scrambling in trying to contain stars shooters really loaded. The Elasto Painters have Yeb Sy for to worry about while the Aces have Gee Miguel Beer.

■ **Second, workhard on precise offensive execution.**

The defenses will be stingy and they will be forced to make sure by passing decisions and shot selection. The playoffs are the most crucial time your teammates.

In the Alaska-Ginebra series, the Aces need to avoid the fluidity that gave them a Fiesta Cup championship. They will need to go low on Ginebra more than Sun needed to pass the ballhome, aside from making that in defensive skills can help win games.

■ **Third, get ready to look for other options when the main get pleased down.**

One trademark of PBA basketball is how the dribble or number-crunching defensive units can stop the offense.

Rolling Derby Ace can be expected to spread the wealth around when Jimmy Yap gets pinned while Mendoza will have to look for other options when Alex Cardenas gets bottled up.

■ **Fourth, get the bench scoring.**

In the playoffs, teams try to win their battles in commonplace minutes so that defense level offensive execution is easier to make stick.

However, PBA playoff basketball through the years has been stacked with players coming off the bench to shine and deliver their Pilipino performances.

The top four teams have very deep benches, and squads that hope to go deep into the playoffs will need every man available.

■ **Fifth, let the coaches worry about the refs.**

Basketball is a concentration game that can swing in a matter of wits. A moment's slip in concentration could be fatal in games that can be expected to be close.

This is probably one essential ingredient to success, where the teams that more powerful team-need communication measure of focus and should avoid feeling that the referees giving them a raw deal.

The coaches will have to deal with various handicaps and lineup shortages will have to use just as crafty a role the playoffs pursue.

DRAGONG BOAT EXPO
By TDP CHOICE
At Sm Lucky LP

THE FASTEST PADDLERS IN THE WORLD
FUELED BY THE COUNTRY'S #1 ENERGY DRINK
The World's first ever all-island outrigger event opened with the coronation of the four-year-running Queen of the Boat crown in the Philippines on Sunday, December 12, 2010.
Thousands of dragon boat enthusiasts, spectators and media gathered to watch and cheer various teams from different sectors of society such as the military, private organizations, corporations, universities to vie for the prestigious all-comers title crowning the country as the fastest in an attempt to get the gold medal for this year's Cobra Energy Drink Dragon Boat Regatta.
Now on its second year, the event is gradually making dragon boat more recognized and accessible to mainstream sports enthusiasts in the Philippines. Marcia Crandall, President of the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation, attributes this success to the organization's partnership with the number one energy drink in the country, Cobra.
More than the media mileage and promotion the event enjoys with the sponsorship, Crandall believes that the sport and the players themselves were given more support and recognition from different audiences both locally and internationally, as both the Cobra Energy Drink Dragon Boat Regatta's popularity, exclusivity and prominence. In fact, the Philippine Dragon Boat Team holds two world records as the fastest crew in world championships.
This year's over-all winners were awarded right after the championships and received medals awarded by Cristobal, the Cobra marketing team and Philippine Dragon Boat Team coach Dexter Tagan. The Philippine Navy Dragon Boat Team this year's crowns the team-men's and mixed divisions, while the Tribal Dragon Boat Racing Team reigned supreme amongst the women paddlers.
2010 Cobra Energy Drink Dragon Boat Regatta Official Overall Winners:
Men (200M)
Champion: Philippine Navy
1st Runner-up: PNPA Firebirds
2nd Runner-up: De La Salle University
Women (200M)
Champion: Tribal Dragon Boat Racing Team
1st Runner-up: Marine Dragons
2nd Runner-up: De La Salle University
Mixed (200M)
Champion: Philippine Navy
1st Runner-up: PNPA Firebirds
2nd Runner-up: De La Salle University
Cobra ENERGY DRINK

Globe hosts annual CEO Golf Classic

GLOBE BUSINESS recently hosted the 6th CEO Golf Classic at the Manila Golf & Country Club in Makati. The event gathered CEOs representing Globe's largest enterprise clients for a day of friendly competition. PAL's Jaime Bautista, Shell's Ed Chua, Genpact's Dan Hayes and Globe's Jesus Romero wrapped off with the top honors.

SPORTS

2nd Fat Ass run on Jan. 8-9

IT'S ALL systems go for the 2nd Fat Ass Run of the Clark Pocket Grounds inside the Clark Freeport Zone for 10, 21 or 42 hours on Jan. 8 and 9, 2011. Registration is fixed for one set initially limited to 150 runners. All runners are expected to finish at exactly 6 a.m. on Jan. 9. For more information, call 09-1080-9999.

Tiong Lian: St. Jude dribblers pull rug from under Hope Christian

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RYAN CRISA and Jason Lapid accounted for more than half of St. Jude Catholic School's total output as they trounced hitherto Hope Christian High School, 70-47, in the Pewgo Metro Manila Thing Liao Basketball Association hostilities on Wednesday at the Ynares Center.

The 5-foot-10 Crisa fired 20 points while Lapid fed 21 markers for St. Jude, cunning to Turley the past two outs.

Crisa, who averaged just 2.6 points in 13 games last season, took Chris Tiplos, who the last one dunkering a 6-ft. all court ball allowing St. Jude to grab the lead for good.

Chris also had eight rebounds and three assists to cop the Pewgo Player of The Game award.

King Bonnecarrère and Jimmy Gaviola tallied 14 points each for Hope Christian. George Linares, Contributor

CHAMPIONS ONBOARD

ALL THE BEST TO OUR NEW FRIENDS, THE PHILIPPINE PATRIOTS FOR THE UPCOMING ABL MATCH THIS WEEKEND. WE'RE RIGHT BESIDE YOU.

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BUSINESS

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'Hot money' inflow surged in Nov.

By Michelle V. Remo

INFLOWS OF foreign "hot money" broke record levels in November as the bullish outlook on the Philippine economy prompted investors to purchase more stocks and fixed-income securities based in the country.

Foreign portfolio investments registered a net inflow of $1.7 billion in November, expanding by 2.6 times from the $713 million seen in the same month last year, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

BSP: Net portfolio investments reached $4.18B in 11 months

The amount was the highest monthly level on the registered.

The increase in November brought cumulative net inflows for the first 11 months to $4.18 billion, increasing by more than nine times from the $455 million posted in the same period last year.

Gross inflows of foreign portfolio investments, meanwhile, reached $11.6 billion in January to November, beating the $7.4 billion in gross outflows. Gross inflows more than doubled from the $5.9 billion seen during the same period last year.

The central bank said the inflow were investments made by foreign funds, mostly from the United States, Singapore, United Kingdom, Luxem-

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IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Fil-Estate unit gets** P300-M loan from BDO /B7

■ **BSP records P34B** in forex loss in H1 /B9

■ **LTO revenue hit** P13.2B in Sept. /B10

Integrity standards set for local firms

By Abigail L. Ho

TI-PHILIP chairman corruption in the country and improve the country's ranking in the global corruption index, the Makati Business Club and the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines have teamed up to launch the integrity initiative.

The project, to be bankrolled by a $1.4-million fund from Germany's Siemens AG, aims to get top management of local firms to commit to ethical business practices and good corporate governance.

At present, as many as 300 local companies have signed the "Integrity Pledge," committing to shun bribery in any form, maintain a code of conduct for employees to pursue ethical business practices, and implement internal systems that will prevent unethical conduct in their companies.

Companies who signed the pledge also vowed to maintain transparent and appropriate financial reporting mechanisms and allow themselves to be subjected to audits should the need arise.

They would likewise enter into "integrity pacts" with government agencies and other businesses, especially in the area of procurements.

"Our focus is on the CEO. It's not just about signing a pledge, but walking the talk, with zero tolerance for bribery and favoring long-term sustainability over short-term gain," BCCP executive vice president Henry Schumacher said. "If you have integrity you pay proper taxes, take care of your people and the environment."

At the next four years, MBC and BCCP with the help of partners, will set up standards by which companies will be measured...an ISO that will recognize qualified firms.

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INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

Dec. 16, 2010

44.150

STOCK MARKET

Dec. 16, 2010

50.35

Share prices drop

LOSE STOCKS yesterday dropped for the second straight session as fund managers scrambled to lock in gains before the year-ends.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange Index fell by 60.26 points, or 1.22 percent, to 4,930.4.

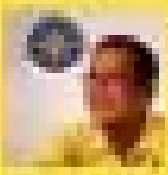
The day's decline was led by the financial counter which tumbled by 2 percent. Most other investors likewise fell by over 1 percent.

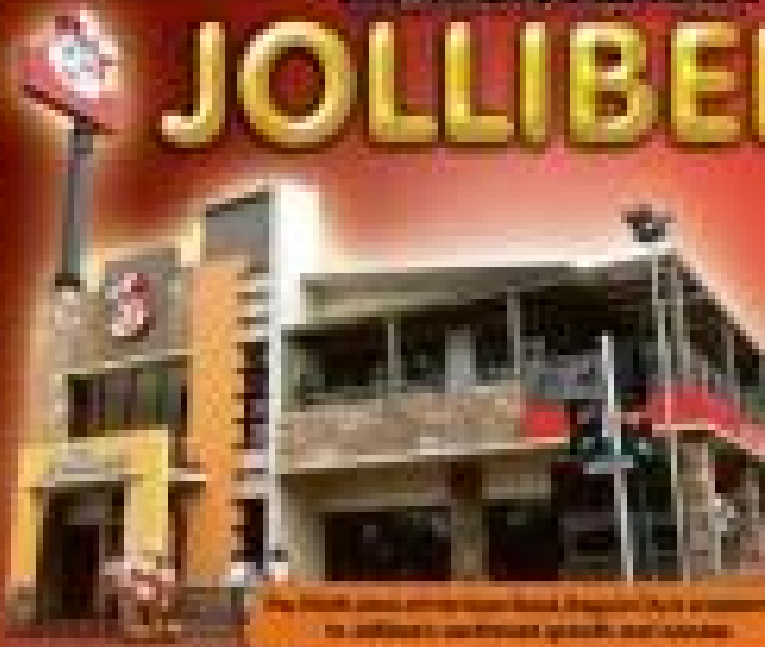
Value turnover was thin at P4.54 billion. There were P560 million in net foreign selling.

Also, there were over three decliners for every single advancer.

Investors pocketed gains from stocks'

MORE, B6





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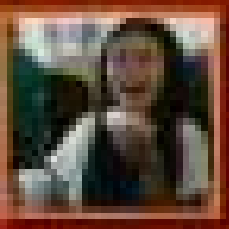

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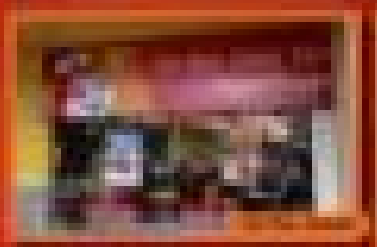
READING LEADS TO SUCCESS

SHARING THE LANGHAP-SARAP TASTE TO THE WORLD



through the years has become a source of pride for every Filipino. Thank you for your greater heights. Maraming, maraming salamat po for making us number one!

BUSINESS

Revenue men raise P1B from tax relief program

By Roxand W Cabrigas

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue raised some P1 billion from its latest tax relief program, according to the agency's chief head Kim S. Jacinto.

The program wrapped up last Oct. 29, Jacinto said. The BIR has since started cracking down on delinquents who were not able to avail of the tax relief.

By law, those delinquents "should face criminal and civil prosecutions," she said.

The previous abatement program was implemented in 2006, where the BIR generated P3 billion.

Under Revenue Regulations No. 9-2010 dated Sept. 13, the program serves to ease the burden of taxpayers who are not able to file tax returns and are required to pay surcharges and penalties.

But taxpayers who were able to avail of the relief program need not pay the additional 25 percent of tax owed in the government. They may negotiate compromise settlements with Bureau officials.

Also, the revenue regulations states that the program is available only to those who have received any notice from the BIR, nor any legal complaints from the Department of Justice.

According to Deputy Commissioner Nelson M. Sajor, this year's abatement raised only about P1 billion because many of the taxpayers who were interested to avail of the program had already received letters of notice from the BIR, rendering them ineligible for the tax relief.

Sajor was referring to the notice that empowers revenue officials to examine and scrutinize a taxpayer's book of accounts and related records to determine the latter's liabilities.

BIR resumes crackdown on tax delinquents

AirAsia's Kuok Khoon Ean has a welcoming smile. An official of the airline says there is room for more players in the Philippines.

Air Asia's local unit sees maiden flight in 2011

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE LOCAL unit of regional aviation giant Air Asia will be flying out of Clark Freeport in Pampanga by the third quarter of next year in the company aims to dominate the highly competitive air travel industry in the Philippines.

Antonio "Tonyboy" Co, Joaquin, Michael Romero and Music Hontiveros will each own 20 percent of the new airline—Air Asia Philippines. The group will partner with Malaysia's long-haul budget airline Air Asia X, which will own 40 percent.

Cojuangco and Romero were named chair and vice chair, respectively, while Hontiveros was appointed the firm's president and CEO.

"There's a massive market here," Air Asia X founder and CEO Tony Fernandes said in a briefing, adding that the airline's maiden flight would take place in September 2011.

The company plans to launch regional flights at first, while it studies the viability of domestic flights in the country, Fernandes said.

The company is considering flights to and from the west coast of the United States. As the moment, flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) is the only one that operates flights between the United States and the Philippines, he added.

Air Asia Philippines, which will have an initial capital of $25 million, will be the Malaysian group's third affiliate outside of its home country. The airline group already has joint operating in Indonesia and Thailand.

"There is no overcapacity in the Philippines. I believe that the pie is big enough for all airlines," Fernandes said, reacting to a recent statement by PAL that the entry of Air Asia could lead to price wars among the airlines operating in the country.

The pressure on prices and profit margins, PAL president Jaime Bautista said, would result in a slowdown in investments and deterioration of services in the public.

Ford exports hit $950M in 11 months to Nov.

By Abigail L. Ho

FORD MOTOR Co. Philippines—the only local vehicle assembler that sells locally made cars overseas—has reached the 75,000-unit export milestone last month, clocking up more than $950 million in export revenues in the first 11 months of the year.

In a statement issued yesterday, FMCP president Randy Krieger said the company's export volume in the January-November period was 42 percent higher at 9,892 units. These included Ford and Mazda models.

This year's exports accounted for around half of the total output of the carmaker's Sta. Rosa, Laguna plant.

"Everyone at FMCP is proud to continue building on the success of our export program here in the Philippines, and passing the 75,000th unit milestone is a significant achievement for all of us," Krieger said.

"The continued export demand for Ford and Mazda vehicles from our Sta. Rosa facility is driven by the world-class quality and safety that our Filipino workforce delivers, and an ongoing commitment to excellence."

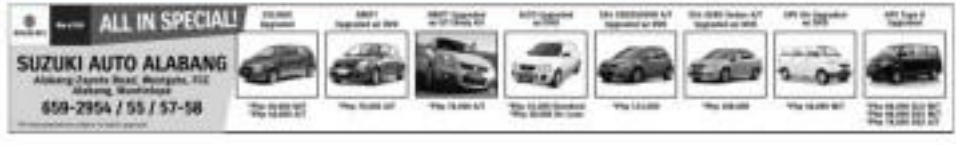
In an earlier interview, Krieger said the company's Sta. Rosa factory was now running at a robust capacity, churning out a combined 12,000 units of the Focus, Escape and Mazda 3 models, which are shipped in various parts of Asia.

Of the total output, or nearly an 80,000-unit level is the export number.

By 2012, however, production of the Focus, FMCP's best-selling model in the Philippines, would be transferred to Thailand, he said.

While he said the company's parent, Ford Motor Corp. based in Dearborn, Michigan, was studying what possible new models could be manufactured in the Philippines, he did not say with absolute certainty whether or not a new model would be brought into the country once production of the Focus is transferred to Thailand.

The company earlier said the investments in the Focus manufacturing plant in Thailand would have no impact on "retrenchment" manufacturing operations.



BUSINESS

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Pure Foods to sell P15B worth of shares

Move aimed at meeting public float requirement

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S largest food company San Miguel Pure Foods Co. plans to sell P15 billion worth of new common shares through a public offering early next year.

The offering is aimed at raising funds for expansion and boosting its stock trading liquidity.

In a recent regulatory filing, SMPFC sought the Securities and Exchange Commission's approval for the listing of 15 billion new common shares at a maximum offering price of P1.000 per share.

The sale of additional shares through a follow-on public offering will widen the company's outstanding stock by about 9 percent, allowing the company to meet the 10-percent minimum public float required by the Philippine Stock Exchange for a company to remain listed in the bourse.

The money will be sold through a public offering by the first quarter of 2011, Ramon Ang, president of SMPFC's parent company San Miguel Corp., told the business yesterday.

The proposed maximum price per share—offering represents a 25.5 percent premium to the food company's last traded price.

SMPFC shares closed at P7.98 per share when the shares were last traded on Dec. 3. Its stocks were not trading at their GL worth high.

The company, which has a public float of less than 1 percent, has a market capitalization of P119 billion.

This development comes after San Miguel diverted prime to sell a substantial stake in SMPFC.

Talks with the two final bidders—another reported to be Singaporean Temasek Holdings Private Ltd. and the Campos family's philanthropic giant United Laboratories in partnership with the Century Group—broke down as both groups wanted to gobble up 30 percent of the food unit.

SMPFC subsequent announced plans to diversify outside its core food business and set some funds for its plan to participate in higher yielding but capital-intensive industries centered into be its power.

In a recent special stockholders' meeting, SMPFC's shareholders also approved the reclassification of up to 75 billion authorized and unissued common shares into common, cumulative and non-participating preferred shares.

Likewise approved was the increase by San Miguel Foods Inc., San Miguel Mills Inc. and other subsidiaries of listed auto long term bonds.

Swedish firm eyes investment in hydropower projects in PH

By Amy R. Borras

STOCKHOLM-based North Investors AB plans to invest in Cordillera Energy Corp.'s three proposed hydropower projects, which may cost as much as $240-5 million, or about P10 billion.

In a briefing yesterday, North Investors director Jan Pellerson said the company was interested in the small hydropower projects in Dupinge, Buaya Ridge, which may generate 4 MW in combined capacity, in Bangabang, Oriental Mindoro, 20 MW, and in Abra, Ilocos Sur, in Oriental Mindoro, 30 MW.

Pellerson did not elaborate. Equity but based on the ground rule, it could cost $3 million to $5.5 million to produce a megawatt of hydropower.

North Investors and Constellation, its subsidiary, were planning to put up a special purpose vehicle company that would oversee the proposed projects. Should the goals through, North Investors may be allowed to take up to 49 percent equity in the SPV.

If the feasibility studies would show that these projects could be economically viable, Pellerson said construction of the hydropower facilities might start by late 2012 and that at least one of them could start operations by 2014.

This will be North Investors' first investment in an Asian country, according to Pellerson, who also noted that the Philippines could be an interesting site for hydropower projects, given the number of islands in the country and its growing population.

He said the company saw the big need to

SEE BACK PAGE

Positive rating boosts SMC share price

Gov't bond swap seen to prop up PH capital market

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT'S recent P100-billion bond swap, timed nicely at the height of the global investing community's appetite for such debt papers, paves the way for local companies' issuance of their own long-term bonds, according to the Makati Business Club.

In a statement issued yesterday, the business group said that apart from the timing, the transaction gave rise to a lot of positive things that deserved to be cited.

"It lengthened the maturity profile of the country's foreign debt, making it more manageable in the long run. It also created room which seems to be so limited resources be reoriented to infrastructure and for social services aimed at alleviating poverty and meeting the Philippines' Millennium Development Goals targets," MBC said.

"The bond swap, furthermore, did not add or tap new sources of debt, did not add to the overall debt burden of the country, which becomes a boon to the government's ongoing program of 'growth-friendly fiscal consolidation,'" it added.

The deal also provided a liquid benchmark for the longer-dated bonds, specifically the 10- to 20-years segment, paving the way for local companies issue their own long-term papers.

This, MBC said, represented "a great windfall to the continued development of the Philippine capital markets."

"All in all, given the success of this landmark bond swap, we look forward to further successes of the Aquino administration and the growth and development of the Philippine economy," MBC said.

The government will issue a total of P100

By Dennis L. Lucas

THE HIGH price of San Miguel Corp. rose to its highest level in over two decades this week after Credit Suisse gave the firm its "overweight" recommendation on the back of its earnings—the first such rating by a foreign-owned brokerage on the conglomerate since the stock's heyday in late 1990's.

More importantly, the local unit of the Swiss investment firm pointed out that the market might not yet fully appreciated the upside brought by San Miguel's power business "particularly in the context of the looming mismatches in power supply-demand."

"Management has been diversifying away from its traditional food and beverage business since 2008," Credit Suisse analyst Dustin Tingo Jr. said in a research note to clients. "Key acquisitions over the past three years include stakes in electric utility Meralco and refineries Petron, as well as electricity generation, as well as the entry into power generation via the purchase of 1,194 megawatts of generating capacity from the government."

According to data from the Department of Energy, the total generating capacity owned or controlled by San Miguel this month is the country's largest power firm ahead of Aboitiz Power.

Credit Suisse gave a target price of P113.50 per share for San Miguel over the next 12 months.

The re-initiation of research coverage by the stockbrokerage, along with the target price, pushed the share price of the diversified firm sharply higher over the last two trading sessions on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

In the two trading days since the report was issued, San Miguel's price has climbed a total of 6.1 percent, ending at P122.7 apiece yesterday. Its price has risen by 40 percent since October of this year.

"San Miguel is the second largest company in the Philippines in terms of market capitalization at P4.1 billion, but ranks just number 41 in terms of daily turnover so far this year," Credit Suisse said, pointing to the firm's small free float, estimated at only 6.1 percent of total outstanding shares by the bourse.

Substantially the lack of liquidity has meant that the stock has little in the way of broker and investor following."

"Management has said, however, that it will definitely address this particular issue," it added.

Recently, San Miguel president Ramon S. Ang said the company could generate as much as $3 billion in additional liquidity from a plan to sell shares to the public through a secondary offer which he estimated would be priced somewhere between P150 and P200 per share.

According to Credit Suisse, San Miguel's management believes in "capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the government's market reforms" in Philippine infrastructure.

"We agree with the strategy, but remain concerned that this company's eventually bites off more than it can chew," it said, explaining why it included only the conglomerate's "profitable" operations in its net asset value, and excluded the yet untested ventures in mining, infrastructure and telecommunications.

Bane of forced retirement

RETIREMENT HAS been romanticized as a person's reward for long faithful service to an employer, whether public or private.

It is meant to give the retiree, while still physically fit, a chance to smell the flowers and enjoy the fruits of his labor in the company of his loved ones.

This assumes that his retirement was well-planned and he received a hefty going-away present from his employer, that it comes to be a happy event or something to look forward to if it is involuntary or made under unpleasant circumstances.

This was the situation an employee found herself in after the Supreme Court recently decided which a dock-worker "Lourdes Gonzalo vs. Employees Inc.," G.R No. 180154, dated Oct. 13, 2010).

In 1976, Gonzalo was employed by the company as a ticket seller. She was later promoted to cashier and clerk type.

On April 1, 1980, the company implemented a retirement plan, which provides that "any participant with 20 years of service, regardless of age, may be retired at his option or at the option of the company."

In December 2000, the company informed that option and retired 47 employees, including Gonzalo, who, at that time, was 47 years old and had been employed for 22 years. Her retirement was to take effect on Feb. 28, 2001.

Exercise

She rejected the P171,982.80 early retirement check offered by the company. On the scheduled retirement date, the company issued a check worth P168,013.70 representing her retirement benefits under the regular retirement package. Again, she refused to accept it.

With this refusal, the company did not give Gonzalo any work assignment after Feb. 15. In turn, she filed a complaint for illegal dismissal on the ground that the company did not have a bona fide retirement plan and, even if it had, she did not consent to it.

The company argued that she was automatically covered by the retirement plan when she agreed to the company's rules and regulations, and that her retirement was a valid exercise of management prerogative.

The labor arbiter ruled in Gonzalo's favor and ordered her reinstatement with full backwages, and which decision was later affirmed by the National Labor Relations Commission.

On appeal to the Court of Appeals, the court set aside the two decisions and declared the "retirement" as valid and legal being in consideration with the company's Retirement Plan."

Undaunted, Gonzalo elevated the case to the Supreme Court for final resolution.

Prerogative

The tribunal noted that "retirement is the result of a bilateral act of the parties, a voluntary agreement between the employee and the employer whereby the latter, after reaching a certain age, agrees to sever his or her employment with the former."

It cited Article 287 of the Labor Code which specifies 65 years as the age for compulsory retirement and 60 years for optional retirement. This age benchmarks, however, do not prohibit the employee from setting an earlier retirement age.

The tribunal said that, although in past decisions it had upheld the validity of the employer's action in lowering the retirement age, the plans involved resulted from bilateral negotiations between the employees and employers.

Those plans were "either embodied in a CBA or established after consultations and negotiations with the employees' bargaining representative.

The consent of the employees to be retired even before the statutory retirement age of 60 years was thus clear and unequivocal.

The tribunal stressed that without such assent to and acceptance of lower retirement ages, the imposition of the retirement plan "will amount to a deprivation of property without due process of law."

Acceptance

In the instant case, the evidence showed that Gonzalo did not voluntarily agree or accept the company's early retirement plan.

The tribunal pointed out that the plan "is not embodied in a CBA or in any employment contract or agreement executed in by the petitioner and her co-employees. On the contrary, Unqueno's Employees Non-Contributory Retirement Plan was unilaterally and completely imposed on them."

For an early retirement plan to be binding, the employee's acceptance should "be explicit, voluntary, free and unequivocal."

It could not be said that the retirement plan is part of Gonzalo's employment contract because the plan was instituted two years after she joined the company and therefore it cannot be considered part of her contract.

The tribunal also debunked the argument that her signature on the payment form her signature in its personnel action forms, which contain the phrase, "employee hereby or hereby acknowledges receipt of and understands or abides by the provisions of his/her Job Description, Company Code of Conduct and such other policies, guidelines, rules and regulations the company may prescribe.

Holding these forms as related to salary increases only, the tribunal said "voluntary ... acceptance by an employee of an early retirement age option to a retirement plan necessarily connotes that her consent specifically refers to the plan at that she has at least read the same when she affixed her conformity thereto."

Thus, after nine long years, it was correct for her Gonzalo who was ordered reinstated with full backwages.

In the wake of this decision, it would be a good idea for companies, labor unions and employees associated to make a close look at their early retirement plans. If any, to see if they conform to the criteria laid down by the tribunal.

(For feedback, please write to rjud ahead@inquirer.com.ph.)

San Miguel secures controlling stake in Petron

By Doris C. Dumlao

SAN MIGUEL Corp. has obtained a controlling stake in Petron by buying more shares in holding company San Miguel Refinery Corp., which owned a majority stake in the local oil firm.

San Miguel is an affiliate of Consolidated Investment Inc.

San Miguel disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that it had exercised the option to acquire 60 percent of the outstanding shares of San Miguel Refinery as provided in an agreement dated Dec. 24, 2008.

"With the exercise of such option, the company beneficially owns about 66 percent of the outstanding shares and shared shares of stock of Petron," San Miguel said.

Prior to the full exercise of this option, San Miguel held a 38-percent interest in Petron.

Conglomerate buys more shares of Ashmore unit

It was earlier reported that the conglomerate would like to raise its interest in Petron to as much as 90 percent by buying out the remaining stake held by the London-based Ashmore group.

San Miguel president Ramon Ang earlier said he intended to build up the company's stake in Petron given its attractive valuation and rosy business prospects.

Petron has remaining free float of only 7.1 percent as San Miguel, prior to the exercise of the option, had made a tender offer to minority shareholders. San Miguel had paid Ashmore P.80 million for an option to buy 300 million.

The rest of the shares that are not yet owned by San Miguel outside the public float are all held by the Ashmore group, which is represented in the Philippines by former Trade Minister Roberto S. Ongpin, also a key shareholder and board member of San Miguel.

Petron has a market capitalization of about P100 billion.

Ashmore, for its part, first obtained a foothold in Petron in 2008 by buying out the 40 percent stake held by Saudi Aramco. It raised its stake afterwards by acquiring the Philippine government's 40 percent interest in Petron and making a rival offer to other shareholders.

'Hot money' inflow surged in Nov.

From page B1

bourg, and Hong Kong. These funds comprised the top 5 sources of hot money inflows to the Philippines.

Of the total inflows, P27.9 billion was invested in stocks listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange. This is the reason why the stock exchange index hit a record high this year.

"Major beneficiaries [of the equity investments] were banks, property companies, holding firms, telecommunications companies, and utility firms," the BSP said.

Purchases of government securities amounted to P1.4 billion of total gross inflows of hot money, while the rest were placed in banks as time deposits and in money market instruments.

Foreign hot money has been flooding almost all emerging markets in Asia, including the Philippines. Central bank officials and capital market analysts credited this development to the optimistic outlook on most Asian economies, which have already overtaken advanced economies in the West.

In the first three quarters of the year, the Philippine economy grew by 7.5 percent. Most analysts believe that the country's actual growth rate for the year would exceed the government's target of between 5 and 6 percent.

Share prices drop

From page B1

Petron Corp., Megaworld Corp., Alliance Global Group Inc., Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Philex Mining Corp., Philippine National Bank, Benguet Mining Corp., Ayala Corp., Metro Pacific Investments Corp., Energy Development Corp., SM Prime Holdings Inc., Ayala Land Inc., Security Bank Corp., Petron Corp., SM Investments Corp., Manila Electric Co. and Cebu Air Inc.

Most of these stocks were the ones that had gained substantially this year and were prone to profit-taking as fund managers prepare for the closing of their 2010 portfolio books.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Fil-Invest Corp. and Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc. managed to close higher despite the gloomy sentiment.

Doris C. Dumlao

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As of December 16, 2010

CURRENCIES

Country	Unit	Cash Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	dollar	1.00	1.0000	43.8500
Japan	yen	120.4500	1.2045	52.8215
United Kingdom	pound	1.5600	1.5600	68.4060
Hong Kong	dollar	7.7600	7.7600	3.4031
Switzerland	franc	0.9815	0.9815	43.0430
Canada	dollar	0.9900	0.9900	43.4115
Singapore	dollar	1.2900	1.2900	56.5665
Australia	dollar	0.9900	0.9900	43.4115
Malaysia	ringgit	3.1200	3.1200	13.6812
Europe	euro	0.7600	1.3158	57.6954
Taiwan	dollar	30.0000	0.0333	1.4605
China	yuan	6.6000	0.1515	6.6441
India	rupee	45.0000	0.0222	0.9744
Thailand	baht	30.0000	0.0333	1.4605
Korea	won	1,150.0000	0.0009	0.0381
Indonesia	rupiah	8,900.0000	0.0001	0.0049
Saudi Arabia	riyal	3.7500	0.2667	11.6933
Kuwait	dinar	0.2800	3.5714	156.6250
Qatar	riyal	3.6400	0.2747	12.0467
Bahrain	dinar	0.3800	2.6316	115.4000
Oman	rial	0.3900	2.5641	112.4615
Abu Dhabi	dirham	3.6700	0.2725	11.9500
Dubai	dirham	3.6700	0.2725	11.9500

Source: Bankers Trust Company as of Dec. 15, 2010
* Peso-Dollar Rate as of Dec. 15, 2010 ** Dollar-Peso Rate as of Dec. 15, 2010 *** Peso-Peso rate

Fil-Estate unit gets P300-M loan from BDO

Fund earmarked for Camp John Hay project

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE FIL-ESTATE group has tapped the country's leading bank, Banco de Oro Unibank, for P300-million worth of support for Camp John Hay.

Fil-Estate unit GM Development Corp. recently obtained a P300 million loan from BDO. The loan was released upon the completion of the construction of the 200-unit residential in Baguio City.

Fil-Estate Land Inc. chair Robert John Antonio Lopez told reporters that only 69 of these residential units had remained unsold to date.

The units are priced between P3 million and P7 million depending on the size. The smallest is a 30-square meter studio unit while the biggest is an 80-square-meter 100 unit.

"The loan has been accepted very well by the market," Lopez said, noting that the project carried a unique threefold payment-to-"fit" program.

The first guarantee, he said, was a guarantee on construction which had been delivered as will the units were soon completed.

The second is a assured lock guarantee which means buyers who invest in the project is assured of a 200-percent return of principal—covering unit acquisition price less all discounts—at the end of the lease-hold term in 2048.

The third guarantee involves the Fil-Estate group's 25-year remaining concession agreement with the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

The third, it is guaranteed sound rock developed of 8 percent reinforcement units.

"It's a hotel like The Manor (an upscale hotel inside Camp John Hay) but the units are owned by individuals so they can use the unit as any unit 30 days and the rest of the year, it makes money because it's run like a hotel," Antonio said.

"The unit owners basically leases back his unit to the management company that runs it like a hotel and collects revenues from it. As a unit owner, you participate in the revenue generation," he said.

Among the buyers of these units condominiums, Fil-Estate's chairman, Jaime Antonio Lopez, is also among the buyers looking for units in Camp John Hay.

In the meantime, GM DevCo is also developing an eco-village within the former military camp. It is a mixed-use which will have 50 stores opening within the next 12 months.

"We're completing construction within the summer," Lopez said.

Among the buyers of these units condominiums, Fil-Estate's chairman, Jaime Antonio Lopez, is also among the buyers looking for units in Camp John Hay.

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"We're completing construction within the summer," Lopez said.

Gov't bond swap seen . . .

From page 88

billion in 25- and 10-year treasury bonds in exchange for existing bonds in what officials said was the Philippines' biggest bond swap program.

The latest debt swap also saw the debut of the longest tenor of benchmark bonds at 25 years.

Bond-market analysts were not surprised since that the market was not to guide for debt instruments of the same length of maturity.

The features of the Treasury launched the debt swap on Dec. 1 with plans to issue at least P50 billion in each tranche. While the offer period ended on Thursday the Treasury received a total offer of P102 billion for exchange into new 25-year bonds and P51 billion into new 10-year bonds.

The bonds eligible for the swap included 25-year bonds maturing from 2020 to 2022 and 10-year bonds maturing from 2011 to 2015.

PRULINK	PRU LIFE UK
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Dec. 15, 2010	Dec. 8, 2010
Bond Fund - Peso	1.6851	1.6838
Managed Fund - Peso	2.4560	2.4560
Growth Fund - Peso	2.1100	2.1130
Equity Fund - Peso	1.3970	1.4047
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.8403	1.8415
Balanced Fund (Euro)	1.2813	1.2808
Balanced Fund (Yen)	1.0207	1.0209
Dividend Fund - Peso	1.0000	1.0000
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.0000	1.0000

Swedish . . .

From page 86

develop energy and provide the much needed requirements of a growing economy.

"One of the things I like about the Philippines is that the government has a program in place for developing renewable energy, which I think is good for the country," he said.

Bjorkenwall said the company was very active in picking through with these projects since permit hurdle. These projects had already been awarded preferential renewable energy contracts by the Department of Energy.

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PLOT STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP WITH BELLEVUE HOTEL

PLOT Corporate Business Group recently hosted personnel ties with the executives of Bellevue Hotel for the fit commission of Hard Connection Network (HCN) facilities, an event and IT session with customers including DOT, DSL, Globe and Access Gateways to its building.

Visited from the Philippines and Metro Cebu, which inspired Asia IPTV Globe, the Bellevue Hotel opened in January 2010. It is the first and only luxury five-star hotel South of Metro Manila. The Philippine hotel is located in the thriving business and commercial district of Alabang.

Present during the exchange signing event were from left to right: PLOT Relationship Manager Mary Josephine Bautista, PLDT Enterprise Solutions Consultant Edgar Ebarle, PLDT Data Services Engineering (DSE) Pre-ordering Center Head Elsa Rosario, PLDT AVP & Head of Enterprise Consultancy Services Ricardo Mendoza, Bellevue Hotel Resident Manager Jeffrey Quinones, Bellevue Hotel Chief Engineer Noel Lopez and Bellevue Hotel IMM Manager Mark Jerome Cuadra.

KMBI receives ISO 9001:2008 certification

Edgardo Mercadera, executive director, and Dominga Ubalubal, chairman and president, during the successful certification audit of the Rural Bankers Association.

The Kabuhayan para sa Mauunlad na Buhay, Inc. or KMBI was recently granted with ISO 9001:2008 Certification, the first among the microfinance institutions (MFI) to be certified by TUV Rheinland Philippines, Inc.

Dominga Ubalubal, KMBI chairman and president, and executive director Edgardo Mercadera received the ISO 9001:2008 which was presented by TUV Rheinland chief executive officer Thilan Jaiswal in a simple ceremony held on December 2, 2010 at its Head Office in Valenzuela City, included in the certification are its head office departments, namely Administration, Operations, Human Resources, Finance, Audit and Product Development, their first certified as a third floor, Metro Bansal I, Tridonwein and Bonnabel City.

The organization looks forward to having all the branches certified next year. This is aligned with the company's theme next year, "KMBI, 10th Year Generation," which wishes to equip the staff even better for the next generation and extend the impact of KMBI to the other members of the clients' family, Mercadera said. "We have this ISO certification as a banner of excellence which we will carry in going our best service to our program members. Ultimately, we do this for the glory of God."

Jaiswal affirmed that "KMBI always scores high standards in the performance of its calling to help communities live in a peaceful with strengthened faith in God and in right relationship with their fellowmen and the rest of creation." She added, "KMBI continuously seeks to adopt technological advances and good management practices that will ensure provision of quality services in our program members, and eventually their families."

KMBI is a Christ-centered development organization that aims to alleviate poverty through the provision of financial and non-financial services.

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Cristina Tagalhan, Branch Channel Manager

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Koronadal City, South Cotabato

Eduardo Divinera, Business Manager

Percy Lourenco, Branch Channel Manager

(083) 2287736 to 37

(0908) 9074653; (0922) 8941

Security Bank Tagum

GF, Uy Chong Seng Commercial Bldg.

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Building a Culture of Excellence

Meralco Development Center (MMLDC) caps 2010 with major awards for its Environment, Safety and Health (ESH) practices

With passion as its driving force and motivator at the core of its heart, the Meralco Development Center (MMLDC) in Antipolo City continues to foster its commitment to its stakeholders, clients, employees, etc. by building a Culture of Excellence. In fact, MMLDC gathered an array of awards and citations from NGOs, private firms, LGUs and government agencies in 2010 who have noted the center's best practices in Environment, Safety, & Health (ESH).

This year, MMLDC was accredited with the Investors in People (IiP) recognition, aimed by the Department of Labor with the Gawad Kalinangan at Kabuhayan (GKK) award, bestowed with the highest "Grandmaster" title during the Zero Basura Champion (ZBC) and the Don Emilio Abello Energy Efficiency Awards (EEAbEA) for its green practices, and recognized by the Philippine College of Physicians (PCP) as its Health Education Reform Act (HERO) partner with a special Presidential Award.

The awards and certifications further encourage MMLDC to improve its systems so that it can share these best practices to clients and beneficiaries. It's not surprising since MMLDC, as an organization remains committed to maintaining Meralco's values of *maasahan, Makabuluhan Maliwanag* Earth, dedicated for the safety and health of workers and residents for the community and beneficiaries.

The Lipa class MMLDC's environmental championship. Left, Tita Lolibeth Kalalayan in videos how teaches kids the importance of segregation and taking care of nature. Below, Participants of the MMLDC's ECA-ERE Mayor Mac Hagan of Lemia, Rizal (4th from left) also participated in the workshop.

Vivian Reyes, Mandaluyong City (3rd from left) Agnes Fabella, MMLDC Executive Director (3rd from left), and the MMLDC team receive the Don Emilio Abello Energy Efficiency Award.

Badge of excellence

MMLDC is the only training center in the country with 5 prestigious ISO certifications. It is a proof of its commitment to excellence which it thanks to clients and beneficiaries.

MMLDC culture to ISO certifications in quality, environment, safety and health is proven the culture of excellence to other organizations. The Investors in People (IiP) recognition later maintain and continuously improve its human resource management practices and systems.

MMLDC continues to upgrades its own capabilities to meet international standards. In 2010, it was accredited for its Integrated Management System (IMS), upgrading it to 2008 standards.

The IMS is MMLDC's trump for ensuring customer delivery of quality service, business growth and continuous improvement. The Center was initially certified for ISO 9001:2000 (Quality Management), and it has now been upgraded to ISO 9001:2008.

On the other hand, its initiatives and efforts to occupational safety and health was noted by the OSLE. MMLDC was conferred in one of the International Awardees, the second highest honor, in the 7th OKK.

The OKK is a national award citing outstanding achievement establishments in terms of responding to the safety and health needs of workers, of work places and community. MMLDC was the only training and development organization honored with the honor.

Guardianship of the environment

With environmental stewardship as one of its major advocacies, MMLDC bagged the "Grandmaster" title and was hailed as "Champion in Reduction" in the 2010 Zero Basura Champion (ZBC). The prestigious competition honored its highest level in 2009.

MMLDC was also awarded by the Philippine College of Physicians (PCP) as its Health Education Reform Act (HERO) partner with a special Presidential Award.

MMLDC has been facilitating the conference of the research work done by PCP's specialists into training materials. The accompanying guide book is intended to help teachers incorporate the right HERO materials tailored to a particular school level and curriculum. The HERO materials will be pilot-tested in 10 public schools this School Year 2010-2011.

MMLDC's resolve to promote the welfare of our planet, and espouse active environmentalism to clients, partners and constituents, especially the students who regularly visit the Center for the Lakbay Kaalaman where they learn about recycling, waste segregation, and how they could contribute to help save our environment.

MMLDC's concern for the environment goes beyond client surroundings, it's a way of life. The Center utilizes an electric shuttle that shuttles people around. Also is its e-car which is a pollution-free vehicle. MMLDC is a zero-waste facility since 2009.

MMLDC also spearheaded in 2010 endeavor that would teach people not only about disaster preparedness, but also how to be more pro-active towards environment conservation. Dubbed as the Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCA-DRR) Program, two municipalities in Rizal, namely San Mateo and Cainta, have become the pilot recipients of the program. The participants, involving not only local government officials and volunteers, but also the mayors themselves, have undergone training, actual assessment, DRR Planning and project presentation.

In return, the Province of Rizal, through the Provincial Social Welfare & Development Office, honored MMLDC with a Plaque of Appreciation for providing capacity-building programs to fellow Rizalenos.

Capping the year on a high note, MMLDC was also cited for its energy conservation and efficiency initiatives and efforts by the Department of Energy. The Center received the Silver Award for the 2010 Don Emilio Abello Energy Efficiency Awards (DEAbEA) which is conferred on a company with improvements in its Specific Energy Consumption and with substantial energy efficiency and conservation projects.

The Award recognizes remarkable contributions of companies and energy managers to considerable energy efficiency and conservation (EE&C) and to their efforts to mitigate climate change through EE&C.

www.mmldc.org

MMLDC is a one-stop training center offering total learning solutions and tailor-fit programs to corporate clients, government agencies, and NGOs. Its accommodating packages have been availed by top companies in the country.

MMLDC is also a foundation with a business arrow. Its surplus funds generated by offering facilities aimed for events and training programs help advance the advancement in environment and education – specifically the public school sector.

To know more about MMLDC, call:
632-8111
Or send e-mail to info@mmldc.org. MMLDC is located along Sumulong Highway in Antipolo. Just an hour's drive from Makati and 30 minutes from Ortigas/cor. Quezon City.

BUSINESS

BSP records ₱34B in forex loss in H1

Central bank cites unabated appreciation of the peso in 2010

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas incurred a P34-billion loss from its foreign exchange operations in the first half due to the steady appreciation of the peso.

According to the latest financial statement of the BSP, the foreign exchange loss recorded in the same period last year only amounted to P799 million.

The foreign exchange loss in the first half then caused the central bank to post a total net loss of P17.44 billion in the first six months.

Central bank officials have admitted that the BSP is poised to post a net loss for the full year of 2010 given the appreciation of the peso.

The appreciation this year of the peso, which broke into the 42-to-a-dollar territory in early November to hit a two-year high, elicited concerns among exporters, some of whom have said that the sustained appreciation of the peso could eventually dampen their competitiveness.

A stronger peso makes Philippine-made goods more expensive in dollar terms, thus less competitive, said the exporters.

Monetary officials, however, dismissed claims of exporters that the strengthening of the peso was affecting their competitiveness, saying that the currencies of emerging Asian markets are strengthening as well, and so competitiveness of Philippine-made goods remains stable.

They said the BSP has no bias to favor of a strong or weak peso, but that it has a policy of tempering sharp and sudden volatility because of potential economic disruptions.

This policy is behind the move of the central bank to buy more dollars in the foreign exchange market, traders said.

Foreign exchange market players said that if not for the intervention of the BSP, the peso could be even stronger and even more volatile.

The peso has appreciated by over 8 percent since the start of the year.

The peso currently hovers at the 42.45:1 level, and is seen to end the year at around the same level, if not at the 44:$1 mark.

Last year, the peso averaged at 47. to-a-dollar and ended 2009 at the 45.35 mark.

Dollar buying by the BSP led to its foreign exchange losses, which in turn affected its income position in the first half.

Officials said the BSP is likely to end the year with a net loss, but stressed that the monetary authority should not be gauged based on economic performance but in terms of its fulfillment of its roles, one of which is tempering sharp volatilities of the currency.

It also boasts of the foreign reflation so far this year, noting that tempering the increase in consumer prices is one of its major mandates.

The expected net loss of the BSP in 2010, if realized, would be a turnaround from the P73.3-billion in net income in 2009 and P8.93-billion in 2008.

In 2007, due also to the sharp rise of the peso, the central bank incurred a net loss of P87 billion.

ERC issues rules on public listing of energy firms

By Amy R. Remo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has released the draft rules that will eventually force power generators and transmission companies, as well as local distribution utilities, to offer at least 15 percent of their shares to the public, as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

In a notice, the ERC said it was seeking comments on the rules that will govern the implementation of Resolution No. 28, Series of 2005, which was earlier promulgated to ensure the power companies' compliance to the Epira.

Under the Epira, generation companies, IPPs and their respective holding companies, which are not publicly listed, shall offer and sell to the public at least 15 percent of their common shares of stocks.

Matching all power firms to go public was meant to "enhance the inflow of private capital and broaden the ownership base of the power generation, transmission and distribution sectors."

The move is also expected to "protect public interest as it is affected by rates and services of the distribution utilities and other providers of electric power."

The firms in place before the Epira was implemented were supposed to comply with the offering five years from the effectivity of the Epira (June 2001). **The new companies, the deadline was five years from the** issuance of their certificates of compliance.

As the public offering was not implemented by 2006, and given the impact of economic conditions on the success of the public offering, a new deadline of five years from the effectivity of those postponed rules was given to the generation companies and the IPPs.

ERC executive director Francis Saturnino Juan said the draft rules cover the different ways that a company or utility may go public.

Under the draft rules, public offering is not limited to listing on the **Philippine Stock Exchange.**

Other modes include the registration of the common shares of stock with the Securities and Exchange Commission; the listing of the shares of stock in any accredited stock exchange or direct offer of a portion of registered exempticorp capital stock to the public and/or their employees, when deemed feasible by the Board of Governors.

FPI seeks ₱500M to curb smuggling

By Abigail L. Vit

IN AN effort to help curb smuggling, the Federation of Philippine Industries is asking Congress to allocate at least P500 million for the government's acquisition of imported goods that have been deliberately undervalued by importers.

FPI president Jesus Arranza, in a letter to Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, said the P500-million special fund, to be included in the 2011 General Appropriations Act, would serve as a revolving fund to enforce the Bureau of Customs' right to purchase undervalued goods.

Under Section 2317 of the Tariff and Customs Code, Customs could acquire goods proven to be grossly undervalued by their importers at a price equal to the value declared, minus duties and taxes.

Arranza explained that allowing Customs to exercise this provision would discourage unscrupulous importers from undervaluing their goods to avoid paying taxes and duties, particularly the 12-percent value-added tax, as they would end up losing the bulk of their capital if caught.

"[The importer's] business will be further affected by the fact that his competitors will soon have the opportunity of purchasing the subject goods at the correct price for the benefit of the government," he said.

The P500 million that FPI was asking Congress to allocate, he said, would just be a one-time appropriation.

He echoed that both Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Customs Commissioner Angelito Alvarez had expressed support for the compulsory acquisition program in a move to help curb smuggling in the country.

PPP and carabao profitability

By Breanne M. Ordañez

PRESIDENT NOYNOY Aquino's policy of private-public partnership (PPP) should not be limited to raising private funds for government infrastructure.

Because the private sector is a reliable partner, PPP should also be implemented in governance and technology transfer.

This is best illustrated in San Miguel, Bulacan.

Cash from carabaos

The Batalang Kabuhayan ng San Miguel, Bulacan (SMK), in partnership with the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) under Executive Director Lilibeth de Cruz, is bringing in significant profit from carabao-related activities to small farmers there.

Seven years ago, SMK started a dairy production project using carabaos. I gave them a P200,000 personal loan to SMK's Ka Tinding Museum for a modern carabao.

From her savings and expansion of this project...she bought a Bulgarian carabao, which produces 15 bottles of milk, which a mere three double-the-seven bottles of milk that a native carabao normally gives.

Due to the efforts of Ka Francis Canseno, the PCC partnered with SMK. The first meeting was arranged by the SMK-affiliated Kapampangan Development Foundation (KDF). The PCC subsequently offered to train women workers on artificial insemination.

That way, the native carabaos could be improved as they could provide higher incomes.

Attractive profits

Why is this so attractive (i. ultimately?) In an interview I conducted with ABC's Mar Balvosar [illegible] (B34,500), he said one crossbred carabao could yield double the P14,000 net income from one bovine of root.

How does this happen? Balvosar said that a purebred carabao can produce 15 gallons/bottles of milk a day. At P20 per bottle, that means P300 in gross income. Assuming production at 300 days a year, this converts to P112,500.

Take away 40 percent of this amount for production expenses and the potential profit comes up to P67,500.

However, PCC notes that the actual net income to the field only reaches P33,000.

This is due to some faulty practices.

Nevertheless, an attractive 46 percent return of investment (ROI) can still be achieved.

A cross-bred carabao's less capacities at P60,000. Though the potential net income is a lower P20,000, the ROI is higher at 66 percent because the investment is lower.

Comparison across breeds

The native carabao is the least expensive at P50,000 to start. Dairy production is only 7 bottles a day, no comparable the 15 and 13 bottles of the crossbreeds and purebreds, respectively. With artificial insemination costing only P500, the resulting carabao female offspring can be sold at P20,000 more than the equivalent native carabao.

It was said, the considered carabao cost produces milk at almost double the production of a native carabao, thus significantly increasing the net income.

With PPP implementation, SMK women will now be trained as volunteer technicians for artificial insemination and carabao upgrading technology.

Three characteristics of San Miguel, Bulacan, make the carabao project very attractive:

1. The vast idle grazing land that provides the carabaos with abundant food;

2. The ready market for carabao milk because of San Miguel, Bulacan's tradition of processing milk into higher value products like pastillas;

3. The initiative of the San Miguel women to bring new technology to their fellow farmers for higher income.

It is this kind of PPP in governance and technology transfer, not just the PPP financial investments, that our country badly needs today.

We recommend that the private sector duplicate this SMK example by taking up similar initiatives and partnering with governments in projects such as this PPP for carabao profitability.

(The author is chair of Agusmed and former secretary for environment/ Angelo's private projects. For inquiries, e-mail agrimark.phil@yahoo.com or telephone (02) 4022113.)

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LTO revenue hit P13.2B in Sept.

Higher car sales, cost-cutting measures boost agency's receipts

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE LAND Transportation Office (LTO) has exceeded its full-year revenue target with three months left in the year due to cost-cutting measures and the increase in the number of registered vehicles in the country.

In a statement, the agency said its total revenue reached P13.2 billion as of the end of September this year.

"This already surpassed the target collections of P12.6 billion as early as September this year," Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) Assistant Secretary and LTO chief Virginia Torres said.

The collection as of mid-September was 4.68 percent higher than last year's 24-month figure.

All of the agency's earnings will be remitted to the Treasury which helps the government raise its budget deficit that is expected to reach a record high this year.

Torres, who assumed her post last July, credited prudent and efficient collection methods as well as the full cooperation of district and regional offices throughout the country as the primary reasons for the agency's success.

"We could not have attained our objectives without the full cooperation of our personnel in entire country and this also reflects the kind of inspiration that the leadership of President Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III has been giving to us," Torres said.

Of the figure, the National Capital Region (NCR), which has collection target of P4.31.6 billion, managed to get P4.376 bil. but as 4.06 percent more than its actual target.

This came as total vehicles in the country reached 8.6 million, with 4.217 million licensed and permits issued and released.

As far as law enforcement is concerned, the LTO also made a total of 750,127 apprehension. Of the seven that accounted that figured in accidents in Metro Manila alone, some 5, 176 drivers and operators were required to attend seminars on traffic safety management.

This developed as various stakeholders and industry players at the LTO commended their support and lauded Torres for her efficient handling and leadership of the agency.

Among those that expressed their support a Private Emission and Testing Center Owners Association, a group headed by Tony Habit that advocates clean air and a green environment.

In a statement, Habit thanked Torres for her efforts in the campaign to end the operations of unscrupulous private testing operators who are engaged in the issuance of fake emission test certificates.

"We are happy with the performance of Assistant Secretary Torres because she has been observing the kind of dedicated leadership which we hardly found in the past... since the change of LTO as a people-friendly and client responsive agency," Habit stressed.

He added that the group will continue to support her despite efforts by some groups to undermine her integrity with adverse publicity, such as by linking her to the controversial lotto-corporate dispute that has been hounding Mendiola Corp., the agency's IT provider.

"It is so hard to find a good leader like her as I just could not understand why some people would seek (to) to tarnish her good name and reputation," Habit said.

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2. Posting of public consultation form to come in Manila to remain in all amount equivalent to 10% of the total value of the items listed for which he intends to bid on, after posting of the auction.
3. Prospective bidders, entering [illegible] in person, must file the duly accomplished Registration Form [illegible] information of individuals, address, and TIN together with the machine copy of their valid identification card (I.D.) and signature specimen. Non-filers of the aforementioned requirements shall not be allowed to participate in the auction.
4. For individuals, a valid I.D. and other supporting documents such as: (1) Community Tax Certificate, Business Permit, Certificate of Registration; (2) Business Name issued by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); and, (3) per BIR, the corresponding registration fee with the Authority to Cause Document Number. Bidders are required to sign in person before the date of actual bidding. Registration may also be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Prospective Bidders's Undertaking (Not to be Witnessed) Examine the following:

a. I/We bid the under of Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) (which)
b. I/We [illegible] of the Bureau of Customs
c. For payment of: _____

Bidder

For further details, please contact the following telephone nos. [illegible]

Atty. [illegible]
Deputy Collector

Lopez group to invest $150M in hydro

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LOPEZ group plans to invest about $150 million in three new mini-hydropower generation plants in Mindanao as part of plans to boost its interest in renewable energy.

First Philippine Holdings Corp., through various subsidiaries, also plans to put up solar farms as part of the recent expansion of capacity in its wafer slicing plant to support additional OEM requirements of solar cells from the previous 600 MW, FPH president Elpidio Ibañez told reporters yesterday.

The wafer slicing plant is owned by First Philec Solar Corp., a joint venture of FPH unit First Philippine Electric Corp. and solar wafer manufacturer SunPower Manufacturing Ltd.

Fred with clients in the picture to the left ahead of entrepreneurs Wood and Irene Bello-Rivera.

Both 62 years old, Wood and Irene got married 14 years ago. Wood was a pastor, dressed in a Barong Tagalog, while Irene wore a Filipiniana. Their wedding was a simple affair, with only the officiant, the groom's parents, Irene's responsible marriage a resident sponsor, a Lapu-Lapu sailing, and at least three girls.

Like any OFW family, they initially had a hard time coming to terms with leaving to live in the many years when, especially from the first wife, are just 11, 13, and 15 years old.

It's a consolation that throughout their journey, Filipino has always been ready to help them without their financial goals as a family as Filipino Legal Council to right. Because there's going to Quezon Highway, Filipino helped the couple open a Filipino Overseas Filipino (OF) Savings Account under both their names so children could a guarantee of sending a home where she can deposit Wood's monthly salary checks that were under his name.

"I talked to the branch manager and told him the about the process. I was even surprised because I was able to get the ATM card within 30 minutes," she said.

The Filipino OF Savings Account is a fixed interest-bearing savings account that does not require any opening or maintaining balance.

PSBank
Overseas Filipino
SAVINGS ACCOUNT

PSBank
Simple lang. Maasahan.
www.psbank.com.ph

This enables the OFW or any of their family members to open an account and instantly get their personalized ATM card in any of Filipino's 180 branches nationwide.

The account enables OFW beneficiaries to transfer their savings to withdraw cash anywhere from Filipino's 220 ATMs nationwide. They can also withdraw from Metrobank, Bancnet, Megalink, and Expressnet automated teller machines (ATM) nationwide and Maestro Cirrus ATMs worldwide. They can also pay many bills using at any Filipino affiliated establishments as well as pay for Filipino Home Loan, Home Credit Loan, Home Construction Loan, or Auto Loan via Automatic Debit arrangement.

By enrolling in Filipino Remote Banking (FRB), the Bank's 24/7 Internet channel, OFWs can conveniently and securely transfer funds to their Filipino OF Savings account, anytime, anywhere, without going to the nearest remittance center or to a bank. FRB users can also pay their bills, view their past transactions, manage their account details, transfer funds, transfer checkbooks, and apply for new bank services.

Since they got their Filipino OF Savings account, Wood and Irene has enjoyed their life, able to talk to Australia – simply deposits on remittance money in the account so that home can easily withdraw it for the family's needs.

Seven months in a row, when her husband is away, Irene feels like a married working mother. "Sumipon ako sa pera ni G. Like I told breakfast for the kids and money there to the school. When they leave at 7:30, I go to the station and stay there for the rest of the morning until 1 PM. Sometimes I go back during dinner time," she says.

"But this kids are still young," she says. "My oldest is not even out of grade school." The president that the current salary might go up for many more years. But it's always comforting to know that Filipino is just around the corner for our needs."

Among those that expressed their support a Private Emission and Testing Center Owners Association, a group headed by Tony Habit that advocates clean air and a green environment.

In a statement, Habit thanked Torres for her efforts in the campaign to end the operations of unscrupulous private testing operators who are engaged in the issuance of fake emission test certificates.

"We are happy with the performance of Assistant Secretary Torres because she has been observing the kind of dedicated leadership which we hardly found in the past... since the change of LTO as a people-friendly and client responsive agency," Habit stressed.

He added that the group will continue to support her despite efforts by some groups to undermine her integrity with adverse publicity, such as by linking her to the controversial lotto-corporate dispute that has been hounding Mendiola Corp., the agency's IT provider.

"It is so hard to find a good leader like her as I just could not understand why some people would seek (to) to tarnish her good name and reputation," Habit said.

processing milk into higher value products like pastillas;

3. The initiative of the San Miguel women to bring new technology to their fellow farmers for higher income.

It is this kind of PPP in governance and technology transfer, not just the PPP financial investments, that our country badly needs today.

We recommend that the private sector duplicate this SMK example by taking up similar initiatives and partnering with governments in projects such as this PPP for carabao profitability.

(The author is chair of Agusmed and former secretary for environment/ Angelo's private projects. For inquiries, e-mail agrimark.phil@yahoo.com or telephone (02) 4022113.)

10% chief finance offer Francis Calleja Pastor, who is also president of power generation unit First Gen Corp., said the new hydro plants to be put up in Mindanao would be undertaken by First Gen.

He noted that another crown jewel, Energy Development Corp., had enough on its plate, especially as it is now pursuing a new geothermal project in Bacon alongside new geothermal projects and the rehabilitation of power plants acquired from National Power Corp.

On the proposed mini-hydro plants, each with a capacity of 32 to 60 MW, Pastor said Mindanao needed more investments in power.

The target is to bring these new plants on stream by 2015.

"We're in the process of completing feasibilities. Hopefully, we'll be able to pursue these projects, which are run-of-river type, projects that are simpler to build," Pastor said.

Clean and renewable energy now accounts for half of the group's power portfolio. The group is also into gas-fired plants.

On top of greenfield hydropower projects, FPH is also interested in bidding for some of the government's power plants put in Caramoan, Calbayog-Bonsucan Kalayaan and Bulibed hydropower assets.

With hefty proceeds from the sale of its interest in power distributor Manila Electric Co., analysts deem FPH in good position to acquire more power generation assets.

US output data point to sustained growth

November pace fastest in four months

WASHINGTON—US industrial production rose at its fastest pace in four months in November, implying a self-sustaining recovery is now underway, but a mild pace in consumer prices indicated still-abundant slack in the economy.

Industrial output rebounded 0.4 percent, the Federal Reserve said on Wednesday, the latest sign to suggest the recovery gained momentum in the fourth quarter.

However, with inflation barely rising, economists said the pickup in economic activity was insufficient to dissuade the Fed from completing its planned purchase of $600 billion in government bonds to keep borrowing costs trapped down, and weekly data showed mortgage applications fell on high rates.

The closely watched core Consumer Price Index, which excludes food and energy costs, edged up 0.1 percent in November, the first gain in three months, the Labor Department said. Overall consumer prices inched up 0.1 percent, slowing from a 0.2 percent rise in October.

The rise in core CPI matched economists' expectations, but CPI was below the 0.2 percent increase that had been forecast.

Prices for long-dated US government debt fell sharply on the data, which cuts investors' pricing in higher growth expectations.

Continued strength in monthly hiring, which has been the clear predictor during the recovery, was underscored by a strong rebound in a gauge of manufacturing in New York state in December.

Adding to the brightening economic picture, credit card delinquency rates fell at major domestic lenders last month as fewer consumers fell behind on bill payments. Reuters

Asian markets turn cautious

HONG KONG—Asian stock markets were mixed on Thursday as traders weighed upbeat US data against a potentially disappointing eurozone credit rating and the possibility of further steps by China to cool its economy.

Tokyo's Nikkei index ended the session flat, gaining just 1.51 points to reach 10,311.29, while Sydney's S&P/ASX 200 closed up 9.34 percent, or 19.2 points, at 4,784.08.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng was down 0.68 percent in the afternoon, while Shanghai's Composite Index lost 0.35 percent.

Hong Kong had plunged 1.99 percent on Wednesday weighed by a threat by ratings agency Moody's to downgrade Spain, in the latest signs of eurozone debt contamination.

Against that backdrop, analysts found some support from a strengthening dollar and data showing that US industrial output rose by a robust 0.4 percent in November after a revised 0.2 percent decline in October.

"If the trend for a weaker yen becomes more explicit on the back of a recovery in US economic conditions and rise in US bond yields, we anticipate a year-end rally in stocks," Masayoshi Yano, senior market analyst at Mitsu Securities, told Dow Jones Newswires.

Shanghai was in a more sober mood after suffering 2.8% percent on Monday on a report that a widely expected interest rate rise had failed to materialize over the weekend.

Data on Saturday showed that unemployed inflation had tapped five percent in November for the first time in more than two years.

"Since the release of (the) November Consumer Price Index ... and other recent data showing robust economic growth, people are worried the central bank will launch further policy tightening measures," said Zhang Zhiwei, a strategist at Minsheng Securities.

Weighing sentiment in Sydney was a decision by Australia's competition regulator giving conditional approval for an alliance between Virgin Blue and Air New Zealand. Virgin Blue gained 3.88 percent, while rival Qantas slumped 2.57 percent. AFP

The best gifts this season

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Power Plant Mall | SM Mall of Asia | Festival Supermall

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Globe TVC wins Silver in Araw Values Advertising Awards

GLOBE TELECOM bagged a silver award for its advertising campaign "Dasal" from the 2010 Araw Values Advertising Awards. The "Dasal" campaign received primetime child member and Globe endorser Zaijian "Jaydee" Jaranilla.

The campaign bested more than 60 entries which participated in the Branded Communications category. Under this category, products and services produced by both commercial companies entities and non-profit organizations were qualified to join. The other category is Advocacy Communication, joined by close to a hundred entries.

Presented by the Advertising Foundation of the Philippines, a social development institution of the advertising and marketing communications industry, organized to promote social responsibility, the 2010 Araw Values Advertising Awards is founded on 7 cornerstone values: love of God and respect for religious beliefs, sincerity more or truth, honesty and justice, love of country and respect for nationals, economic and traditions, reverence for family unity and inviolability of marriage, respect and care for human life and dignity and the rights of all, respect for law and authority and the promotion of self-discipline and concern for and preservation of environment.

The 7 values also serve as a primary judging criterion for qualifying entries and winners of the industry biennial awards program. The "Dasal" campaign of Globe was recognized for having instilled the value of reverence for family unity and inviolability of marriage. Earlier this year, the campaign also received a silver award from the 2010 Facebook Awards, organized by the University of Asia and the Pacific-School of Communication as one of the best brand campaigns on the the Best Locally-Oriented Values category.

"Our advertisements do not just promote our products and services, but also uphold positive and good Filipino values for national and social progress," said Cathy Sarmenta, head of marketing for Globe brand. "We are very honored with this citation and this encourages us all the more to come up with campaigns that truly enrich members and enrich our society."

The board of judges was composed of over 30 luminaries in the field of marketing, advertising and communications industries, including equally renowned members of the academe and directors of non-profit organizations. Criteria for judging were 50% values message, 40% creativity and 10% implementation and execution.

THE "Dasal" campaign starring Globe endorser Zaijian "Jaydee" Jaranilla.

EPLDT EXEC TALKS ABOUT VIRTUALIZATION IN CIO FORUM

Kraft Foods turns a page for students

CAN YOU imagine going through life not being able to read? Kraft Foods Philippines (KFP) surely cannot. That is why the four-organization partnership with Save the Children for a "Reading for Life Weekend Read-Aloud" program for the students of Sitio Sampaloc, Sitio II Elementary School in Pantabangan. This program recently came to a close last Nov. 26 with a grand finale ceremony.

"Year to Kraft Foods' highest purpose to Make Today Delicious through all aspects of its operations, employee-volunteers joined here the Children Aid for 15 weeks to impart the love of reading. Twenty-five students with reading difficulties from Grades 2-3 participated in storytelling sessions and development activities with them.

"This reading program shows that even the smallest acts of compassion can make a big difference," shares Rudy Mall, Kraft Foods Philippines general manager. "Delicious is our difference; it is part and parcel of what we are as an organization. This purpose extends beyond our products to our involvement in the communities."

During the closing ceremony, 1st grade teacher Lorie Moreno related how the reading sessions helped her students. "There has been a 75% improvement in reading ability among my students who participated. They are now more confident in reading sentences." She added, "Reading stories helped improve their vocabulary. Students have now recognized the importance of reading to their studies. The support from their parents and the volunteers helped greatly as well."

"Only six out of ten students graduate from elementary. Some drop-out due to many causes, they cannot learn well and keep up with their classmates because they cannot read," explains Dr. Joseph Michael Singh, director of Program Implementation and Management of Save the Children. He continues, "The program has saved 25 students from dropping out. I encourage teachers, parents and the community to keep working together for their welfare."

Sitio school principal Gerry Lumabao, "It was great to see the volunteers from Kraft Foods even running with their families to help us make every child a reader. I, together with all the teachers and the parents are very thankful."

The reading program may have ended but for the Save the Children Kraft Foods will remain as its 1st partner in the lives of the Sitio Sampaloc students. Through an Adopt-a-School program, Kraft Foods aims to move Sitio Sampaloc into 8 tiers out of the top five in Pantabangan City by 2015. The page on the road ahead may be over but a new chapter has just begun, with a very promising ending.

BASF pest control products prove efficacy in field trial site

AN OLD home inside of about 70% wooden materials located on land exclusive to termite infestation proved to be a viable testing ground for a team of pest control experts using a range of world-class termiticide products from the global chemical company BASF Two weeks after treatment application, the site was declared by SPECS' Pest Management and Services Inc as termite-and pest-free. As a certified pest control operator using BASF products exclusively, SPECS was further convinced about BASF products' efficiency and effectivity. More so for Termite Garden, who was relieved to find his dwelling finally free from the threat of devastation caused by a multiple termite colony.

These pest control products from BASF were used for the Garden property: Fendona, Sentillan, and Cyptrox. Sentillan, a powerful liquid termiticide, was applied through power sprayer and soil injection around the perimeter, to act as a barrier against termites. Cyptrox, the only termiticide in powder form, was also dusted on the termite and around. A powerful pesticide, Fendona, was also applied through an air sprayer around the perimeters, to address the crawling and flying pests. SPECS' Pest Management and Services Inc attributes the efficacy of Sentillan to a highly resolved pyrethroid content that is toxic to all termite species. Cyptrox, meanwhile contains 0.5% Hydramet, which is the most global biocide enough in eradicate termite colony eliminations. It is really-kills and not just repels termites, without the final result and adverse effects to humans and the environment.

This "green" advantage is another outstanding quality of BASF products, offering low toxicity to humans and animals while being very potent in eliminating termites. This is why the unique tools of the Cyptrox-Sentillan program is now gaining a reputation in the industry for providing proven protection versus termite treaty and infestation for at least five to eight years.

UNTV News and Rescue Team's new tagline

AS PART of its unwavering service to the Filipinos, UNTV News and Public Affairs has launched its new tag line, "Tatong Mura, Bago Balita" in which its news teams were trained to save lives in critical emergency situations. It is the brainchild of Mr. Public Service, himself, Kapa Daniel Razon as he endeavors to get a total of broader spectrum of public service for others to follow. As it sets the norm in a critical situation or disaster, other news organizations would opt to being the first in getting and delivering the news. For UNTV to be glorified in its of assistances and of relieving a person in such condition are of utmost importance. Gathering information surrounding the incident and of delivering it on TV only come next. Emergency health care providers and civic leagues have been witnesses to this service we started this advocacy. That inch-self is more. Professionals in the field of emergency search and rescue attested that UNTV is the first and only television station who initiated to have its news teams and employees undergo rigorous training with the purpose of saving people's lives and limbs in mind. That is UNTV's commitment of concern, dedication and genuine public service. Tatong Mura, Bago Balita! UNTV is local (UHF) channel 31, Direct Satellite B, Destiny Cable 8, Cable Link 17, Sky Cable 33 and Free like web streaming at www.untvweb.com

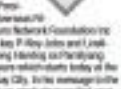
MSO, Silverlitter, Robert Sena at Symphony BGC

IT IS an edifying musical fusion when one of Asia's oldest symphony orchestras, the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) (founded 1926), collaborates with powerful vocalist Robert Sena and electronic music genius DJ Silverlitter for a performance befitting the holiday season. MSO with principal conductor and music director professor Arturo Molina together with Bombo Radyo Cebu's (DSC-Holdings Perspective) so-called certified Symphony Idol, Silverlitter will be treated to classical masterpieces such as the Nutcracker Suite, Winter from the Four Seasons, and the most-loved Christmas melodies like White Christmas, Sleigh Ride and others. Such a mix of genres, such all-time beautiful musical pieces and brilliant performers are - it will only take us pertaining there all live to believe the unlimited possibilities of creativity. Symphony BGC is a free, one-night affair at Bonifacio High Street, BGC near Krispy Kreme(s) on Dec. 14 at 8 p.m.

Eight SSS members won P5,000 each in Bayad Center's electronic raffle program

EIGHT SSS members won P5,000 each through Bayad Center's electronic raffle program titled "Libre Libong Cash Pagbayad, Lingga Ginggang Panalo" last September and October. The winners for the September draw were Augustin Bautista Jr. of Bayawan, Negros Oriental; Rivier Gonzales of Consolacion, Cebu; Arlyn Labrador of Peralta, Bataan and Ferrel Catalang of Tandang Sora, Quezon City. They have paid their SSS contributions and loans at SSSnet Shop in Bayawan, SSSnet Cebu Pardo and SSSnet Tandang Sora and Bayad Center branches respectively. Meanwhile, the October draw winners, who have respectively paid their contributions and loans at Mall and Mini-SSS, USSC Alabang, Bayad Center Starmall-Shaw and SSSnet Antipolo Kaltex, were Cenon Guardian of Payatas, Quezon City; Venus Robino of Alaminos, Pangasinan; Elfinda Sinpatanas of Makati City; and Gay Suarez De Mateo of Lucena, Aklan. The raffle promo is open to all SSS members who are self-employed voluntary, and OFWs, and who are paying their SSS contributions and SSS salary loan either at Bayad Center Head Office, Bayad Center branch, Kwarta-an-ya-to Fast, DS, 2011. Participating SSS members will automatically earn one raffle entry for each type of loan and contribution payment they can make in a month. Raffle draws, which are supervised by SSS representatives, are being made twice a month with four winners for each draw at the SS Bayad Center Head Office. Draws have started last Sept. 16 and 30 followed by Oct. 14 and 28, and Nov. 11 and 25. Luckdraws for the year will be on Dec. 9 and 22. Raffle draw schedules for next year will be on Jan. 6 and 20, Feb. 3 and 17, and March 3. Bayad Center, the leading operator of the Bayad Center Network System of payment collection since February 2006 and a direction subsidiary of the Intellipay and market leader in the payment collection business. It has now over 1,400 Bayad Center branches located nationwide that accepts payments for over 140 brands covering SSS, NGO Certificates, PAG-IBIG, National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation, electric and water utilities, internet, cable TV, cellphones, landlines, and insurances among others. It has started providing Filipinos all over the country convenient ways to pay their bill since 1997.

P-Noy, Binay laud Pamilyang OFW's expo organizer



PRESIDENT BENIGNO S. Aquino III and Vice President Jejomar C. Binay lauded the Pamilyang Ganap na OFW alyansi Workers-Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Network Foundation Inc. (Pamilyang OFWs) for organizing the training key P-Noy, Binay and Leadership Expo 2010 (Part 2) and the 6th Pamasaklang Meeting ng Pamilyang OFWs at Silonis, Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Association Bldg. at the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) in Pasay City. It is the homepage Union Pamilyang OFWs, Pres. Aquino said: "It brings a great pleasure that your foundation has organized these events to pay tribute to our modern day heroes and also there in their future undertakings." Binay, in his message to the Pamilyang OFWs, said: "Events such as these are very much welcome. I believe that a thorough knowledge of RAMS and other livelihood opportunities will lead to the empowerment of OFWs and their families to be financially independent." The two-day exposition is a one-stop-shop for jobs, livelihood, investment and business opportunities being offered by the government, private and non-government organization sectors.

Security Bank opens more branches

SECURITY BANK Corp. (SBC) continues to bring its services closer to more customers through an ongoing nationwide branch expansion program. The bank earlier opened its Cebu Ayala Main branch to serve the manufacturing industries within this thriving business district, while two other new branches opened in Alabang, Muntinlupa and in the commercial center of Carmona City in Cavite. Other branches that recently opened are located at the Trinoma in Quezon City, the emerging new business district, with two new branches – SBC Infinity Towers Branch and SBC Net Cube to complement the existing branches within the complex. Two other provincial sites have become operational in Koronadal City, South Cotabato and Catarman, Northern Samar. Customers can expect convenient, professional and personalized services within easy accessibility as Security Bank expands its presence throughout the country. To learn more about Security Bank, visit www.securitybank.com

NNC conducts nationwide convention to discuss hunger mitigation and malnutrition concerns

THE NATIONAL Nutrition Council of the Department of Health recently concluded three-island wide Barangay Nutrition Scholars Conventions and the National Convention of Barangay Nutrition Program Coordinators.

The Mindanao convention for the Barangay Nutrition Scholars was held at the Grand Men Seng Hotel, Davao City last Oct. 20 to 23, and was participated by 1,200 delegates from Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, ARMM and Caraga. The Visayas BNS Convention was held at the Cebu International Convention Center last Nov. 10 to 11 and was also attended by 1,200 delegates from Region 6, Region 7 and Region 8. Last Dec. 8 - 9 the Barangay Nutrition Scholars Convention for Luzon was held the Philippine Trade Training Center in Pasay City as the venue of the convention. It was attended by 1,200 delegates comprising the Barangay Nutrition Scholars from Regions I, CAR, Mimaropa, Calabarzon, Region 5, the Cordillera Administrative Region and from the National Capital Region.

The National Nutrition Council also convened more than 500 nutrition program coordinators from all over the country for its biennial Convention of Provincial / City Nutrition Program Coordinators at the APP Hillcrest Clubhouse last Dec. 6-7, 2010.

The highlights of these conventions was the discussion of hunger mitigation and nutrition enhancement programs and the organizations of the BNS and D/CNPCs into a national federation in order that they will be confined and coordinated efforts to provide nutrition, education and hunger mitigation inputs to families at the barangay level.

NNC executive director assistant secretary Maria Bernadette T. Flores said that "the convention enabled the BNSes and D/CNPCs to learn about the latest nutrition situation and strategies to address the problems of hunger and malnutrition." Flores added that the convention "will facilitate the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals particularly the goal on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger specifically its 2015 target on reducing underweight among children by half of 1990 levels and proportion of hungry households."

These conventions I, I finalized the 2011-2016 priority actions to address hunger and malnutrition into action programs in the community level; 2. Enhanced self development and enhancement techniques to improve one-on-one performance as Barangay Nutrition Scholars; 3. Created camaraderie among the Barangay Nutrition Scholars through participation in fellowship opportunities and the organization of an association or federation based on offering services; and 4. Expressed unity by joining the "One Nutrition, One Nation Movement" and committing to encourage other members of their communities to join in.

ProductFILES

X.O. Knives: A cut above the rest

KNIVES ARE often ordinary items in the kitchen but for some chefs, they are a vital part of their process related to food preparation and other domestic functions. Furthermore, knives can also be considered as things of awe and splendor, and there are a growing number of collectors in the Philippines who find aesthetic value in them. While the surging demand, X.O. Knives has opened a shop in Eastern City to cater to Filipinos who collect and appreciate high-quality knives, just one these not only to the kitchen but also there as works of art.

Since, X.O. Knives is already a wide array of custom-made, semi-custom knives, factory-made knives, Ryobi stainless for knives and more. X.O. Knives is also the exclusive seller of custom-made knives made by some of the world's acclaimed knife makers like Warren Thomas, Pat Pardo, Mark Darrell, Pat and Mike Crawford. The world of these artists, with their own unique styles and techniques in knife artisanship, are placed not only for the materials they use but also for the unique mix of each knife they make. X.O. Knives is located at 30 Maria Clara St., corner Bonifacio St., Quezon City. It is also accessible at Old Clubhouse Kapitbahay. The shop is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, SMS: 0917-7329999 or e-mail xoknives@gmail.com.

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TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Roberto Ongpin Building, Industry Sector, Roxas Blvd. Pasay City
Tel. No. 891-0648 / Telefax No. 318-14687
e-mail: bac@peza.gov.ph
website: www.peza.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID
Printing Services for the PEZA Coffee Table Book
(PEZA-IRO-0810-01)

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for the year 2010 intends to apply the sum of Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos Only (PhP2,500,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Printing Services for the PEZA Coffee Table Book. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening.
2. The PEZA now invites bids for the printing of 4,000 copies of PEZA's Coffee Table Book. Delivery of the Goods is required within twelve (12) calendar days from receipt of Notice to Proceed. Bidder's annual lease computed within this bid for (2) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a custom similar to the Project. The description of the eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly in Section II Instructions to Bidders.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

   Qualified Bidding is restricted to Philippine citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to commensurate tariff. [4]
4. To ensure the quality of the Goods and the capability of the bidders, bidders must have completed a project quality (50) Coffee Table Book Project(s) in the last two (2) years, and must not have less than bidding equipment which shall be inspected by the Procuring Entity during Post-Qualification:
   a) Imposer (1) unit/set
   b) In-house Binding
   c) Two (2) computers to plate-to-plate machines
   d) In-house generator set in case of power outages
5. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on 17 December 2010 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos Only (PhP 2,000.00).

   It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, provided that the bidder shall pay the purchase fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.
7. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on 04 January 2011 at the PEZA Board Room 5th Floor, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.
8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 11 January 2011. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in the Philippine Government Procurement Act Manual.

   Bid opening shall be on 11 January 2011, 2:00 p.m. at the PEZA Board Hall, 5th Floor, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.
9. In case any of the above dates is declared as a special non-working holiday, it will be automatically moved to the next working day.
10. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to the contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
11. For further information, please refer to:

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    3rd Floor, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
    Email: bac@peza.gov.ph
    Telefax No. 321-6851
    Tel. No. 891-0648 local 213
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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and Address of Company/ Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
EAGLE HOME JOY LANGUAGE CORPORATION 3/F Bldg. 1a Corporation Square, Complex, SF South International, Las Piñas City	Gordon Norman Hicks American	ESL Teacher
PACIFIC STRATEGIES & ASSESSMENTS PHILIPPINES, INC. 19/F Tower 1, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Ave., cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Sara Tan Wall American	Director of Operations
ASIA SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY, INC. 6/F 136 Corporate Center, Valero St., Makati City	Gunnar Ernst Viktor Eriksson Swedish	Consultant
JT INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC. Units 2705 Discovery Centre, 25 Meralco Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Guillaume Bernardin Cuny Swiss/ Mona Alina Wuerdeen	Portfolio Brand & Trade Strategy Director
TRAVELLERS INTERNATIONAL HOTEL GROUP, INC. 2/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Matthew Peter Holmes Australian	Food & Beverage Director - Wynand Hotel Manila
OMEGA DIRECT RESPONSE ASIA, INC. 23/F Silver City Mall, Frontera Drive cor. Doña Julia Vargas Ave., Frontera Verde, Pasig City	Ahmed Hesham Hamdy Kamshish Egyptian	President / CEO
OMEGA DIRECT RESPONSE ASIA, INC. 23/F Silver City Mall, Frontera Drive cor. Doña Julia Vargas Ave., Frontera Verde, Pasig City	Rupesh Bhakta Shrestha Nepalese	Site Director
OMEGA DIRECT RESPONSE ASIA, INC. 23/F Silver City Mall, Frontera Drive cor. Doña Julia Vargas Ave., Frontera Verde, Pasig City	Rahul David Gonsalves Canadian	Senior Vice President & Country Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. 6/F BGI Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Rajesh Mangrulkar Indian/ Malaysian	Associate Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. 6/F BGI Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Maximilian Arcadio Lalamove Indonesian	Consultant
ACCENTURE, INC. 6/F BGI Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Budiono Indonesian	Consultant
KNIGHT CRUISE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Jun Ki Lee Korean	ZIP Host - ISP Services
KNIGHT CRUISE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	James Li Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
KNIGHT CRUISE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Yingying Bao Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
KNIGHT CRUISE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Tong Da Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
KNIGHT CRUISE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Lingwen Ren Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services

Name and Address of Company/ Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
BRIGHTLEISURE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Jin Long Korean	ZIP Host - ISP Services
BRIGHTLEISURE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Hao Ye Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
BRIGHTLEISURE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Yuan Dao Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
BRIGHTLEISURE MANAGEMENT INC. 5/F Star Cruises Centre, 150 Andrews Ave., Newport City, Pasay City	Shuai Luo Chinese	ZIP Host - ISP Services
WEI YONG GARMENTS (MANILA) COMPANY INC. Km. 23, West Service Road, South Super Highway, Cupang, Muntinlupa City	Wei Chieh Chen/ Taiwanese	President
MAN HONG HONEY, CORP. LTC 08 Upgrade 01 - Sto. Rosario, Sampaloc, Pasig City	Chun Hsien Li Taiwanese	Project Consultant
ADVENTURE, INC. 4800 Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jaeho Yu Singaporean	Consultant
AURORA TECH CONSULTANCY, INC. Unit 9H Bonifacio Plaza Bldg., 2133 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Nasrul Anwar Indonesian	Sports Trainer
AURORA TECH CONSULTANCY, INC. Unit 9H Bonifacio Plaza Bldg., 2133 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Lin Huang Chinese	Customer Service - Chinese Speaking
NEXGEN RESOURCES, INC. 23/F 6750 Office Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jong Hwan Shin Korean	Project Manager
NEXGEN RESOURCES, INC. 23/F 6750 Office Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Nadeem Nasser Lati American	President
NEXGEN RESOURCES, INC. 23/F 6750 Office Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Sang Keun Park Korean	Operations Manager
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Chanwoo Lee Philippines	Trial Mortgage Customer Service Officer
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Nguyen Anh Thu Nguyen Vietnamese	Vietnamese Language Customer Service Officer
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Sashi Pusti Wanggono Indonesian	Bahasa Indonesia Language Customer Service Officer
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Bao Yen Ho Vietnamese	Vietnamese Language Customer Service Officer
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Hermanto Indonesian	Bahasa Indonesia Language Customer Service Officer
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LIMITED 11/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Dwi Yu Ling Indonesian	Bahasa Indonesia Language Customer Service Officer

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned applications please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. EDMUNDO C. AGRAMONTE
Regional Director

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. NCR
3F Intramuros Bldg. 2, Brgy. Palanan, Zulueta Cor.
Muralla Sts., Intramuros, Manila
Tel. No. 527-3265

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

	Name and Address of Company/ Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Nationality	Position
1.	MATEX INTERNATIONAL, INC. 23/F L Bldg. La Fiesta, Salcedo Village	Mr. Katsutaka Nara Japanese	Technical Services Manager
2.	KFF COMPANY, INC. 2/F Tiendesitas, Pasig	Mr. Akira Maeda Japanese	Treasurer
3.	SYNCHRO GLOBAL STORAGE TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES CORP. Laguna Technopark, Binan, Laguna	Mr. Chiaren Kendall Hsu Taiwanese	SAP Product Engineering and Quality Assurance Director
4.	FAITH ACHIEVE PLASTICS CORPORATION ECOL Rosario, Cavite	Ms. Fan Hong Chinese	Quality Consultant
5.	ANGELES COMPANY INCORPORATED 2/Flr S. Esguerra Ext. Phase 2, Barangay Valenzuela, Angeles, Pampanga	Ms. Shiuan Shu Lydia of Sung Hsueh	Accounting Manager - Taiwan
6.	OSAKA ING SYNNES CORPORATION Laguna Technopark, Binan, Laguna	Ms. Akemi Inoue Japanese	Interpreter

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned applications please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. EDMUNDO C. AGRAMONTE JR. (2010) R
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Japan pushes green tech, tourism to weather economic storm

TOKOHAMA Doll, produced to commemorate the opening of the Yokohama Doll Museum in 1956.

By Abigail L. Ho

IT MAY have significantly suffered from the global recession and it may have been dislodged by China from being the world's second largest economy, but Japan is not about to just sit its core out and mourn its losses.

At the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Yokohama last month, Japan proudly showcased various state-of-the-art green technologies that aimed to preserve Mother Earth for the future generations, side by side with arts and crafts that showed the creativity of the Japanese people.

This juxtaposition of the old and the new made up the "Japan Experience" that this year's host country shared with the hundreds from the 21 member-economies that attended the week-long conference of business leaders and heads of state.

Occupying a huge part of the exhibit hall were various green technologies, ranging from clean for renewable energy installations and energy conservation and efficiency to those for wastewater treatment and solid waste processing, also scattered all over the exhibit venue were the latest electric vehicle models, both those already in the market and those still in development.

The Japanese government-initiated exhibit used the tagline "clean tomorrow" for the technology part of the exhibit to capture the message it wanted to impart—that Japan continued to be at the forefront of helping make a better world through technology.

2 CLOVER leaf and heart-motif box

Cleaner energy, environment

The Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro), the Japanese counterpart of the country's Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, brought together 28 companies engaged in the development and manufacture of technologies that aimed to reduce energy use, produce cleaner power, and treat contaminated

(STORY CONTINUES ON B8)

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"KIMITSU-BAKO" (a secret box)

TRICK boxes

Japan pushes green tech, tourism to weather economic storm

From page B1-1

REALISTIC sushi magnets (Japanese souvenir candidate)

'In this day and age, Japan's rich cultural heritage continues to thrive'

COFFEE cup secret box

TURBINES

HEAT-REDUCING paint

OBI chairs

That old Japanese charm

Amid all the cutting-edge technologies seen at the conference were those from different regions in Japan, showing how a rich cultural heritage could still thrive despite scientific and technological advances.

One interesting exhibit featured various kinds of Hinoki-Bobo, or "secret box," which, as the name dreamed, would keep secret notes and small trinkets away from prying eyes and hands.

as either on top of the cup—magnetic keeps down two, each of the two cubes has a magnetic face). After separating cup from coaster, one has to look for the slot on the top of the cup to slide the cover out.

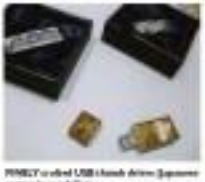
To open other trick boxes, one has to shake, spin, or tap the boxes in sleeves—the trick holding the boxes together (shades—the secret of the boxes revealed).

Those boxes, among other Japanese crafts, were some of Japan's tools to attract tourists to visit the country. And Japan took its tourism seriously. So seriously, actually, that the government even held a contest to come up with the best Japanese souvenirs.

The Visit Japan Campaign (Japan's Attractive Inbound Contest 2009 yielded such ingenious pieces as USB thumb drives, Japanese mini servers, and chopsticks, all hand-painted, and even realistic looking magnets that looked good enough to eat.

While most Japanese would admit to being threatened by China's emergence as the second largest economic power in the world, some of them would say that they would take the competition sitting down. And the juxtaposition of culture and leading edge technologies is the weapon of choice of the world's third largest economy in regaining its No. 2 slot.

PRESENTATION of Japanese souvenir contest entries


PINKY-colored USB (thumb drive) (Japanese souvenir candidate)

SAKE carafe set (Japanese souvenir candidate)

How can there be profit when prices are low?

Q: WE WERE attendees at your "Market Responsive Pricing Intensive" seminar just like the entrepreneur who wrote you last week. The boss of us are with a choice of 2-3 star hotels and we still have questions. It's about Goldbed's low, really low prices for its rooms. Is Goldbed in doing false Robin Hooding if you're coming from Makati. There's a misnomer in front of the building. It's in promoting a room for P888 a night. That's the pricing, which is not on its website. At such a low, really low pricing, how can it make money? Or is it?

A: Although we do not have access to the Goldbed's PL (financial statement), the fact that it has expanded to previous 6 sites in less than a year suggests that it's most likely making money. So we can go directly to your first question: "How can Goldbed make money at such a low, really low pricing of its rooms?"

Just like an airline

We assume that you already know that Goldbed is owned by the Robinsons Land, that is, the Gokongwei's. That's the same owners of Cebu Pacific. It's useful to start from this because it explains why Goldbed caters its rooms just like to airline.

As every frequent traveler knows, an airline prices a flight ticket according to changing passenger load. At a flight's ETD (estimated time of departure) approaches and there are still empty seats, passengers go online and buy your unlisted for a 50-percent discount. Since the hour of closing of the gates. That discount can go up to 70 percent or even 80 percent and it price falls to 10 percent or even 20 percent of its original level.

As time do Our because supply rates (as like perishable goods as a seasonal source when flight lines more. If not come, selling an empty seat even at 80 percent (the usual means there's at least 20 percent contribution to overall cost recovery and profit. That's analogous to a hotel's unoccupied room every night. It's a non-revenue contributor. So you might as well sell it at a big discount, or at what you call "a low, really low price."

Well, such low pricing will give Goldbed profit? To get some credible answer, let's start by understanding where profit come from. For simplicity, we will talk of profit as the difference between revenue and costs. So to obtain increased profit, you should be able to raise revenue or lower costs. You get very much more overall profit if you can do both. And it, incomes revenue and at the same time lower costs.

How do you raise revenue? By the hotel, revenue is price (or room rate) times number of occupied rooms. So to increase revenue, you either raise price or increase the number of occupied rooms, that is, get more hotel guests. But Goldbed lowered its prices. Hence economics tells you that when you cut price, you manifest of buyers will in the usual case increase. If Goldbed can increase its number of guests at a rate greater than the rate of decrease in price, then revenue will increase.

Not just low price

It looks like Goldbed has been able to do just that. In fact, in its first month, it reported that it had a 60-80 percent occupancy on most days. Two of those days were fully booked! So was the low price alone responsible for pulling that kind of customers that boosts the 2-3 star hotel industry's occupancy rate just 20% rooms to sell. So-one: if it has only numerous hotel guest rooms whose selling productivity is a laughably low 30 percent, all that's needed is to put full occupancy is to sell to 2,000 names. Than 18 percent productivity will go to look not to targeted full occupancy. That's what we called in a previous column as an "MMF" imagination of the marketing task" that's economic and readily attainable. Goldbed must have been so productive with its other marketing, selling and promo budget.

So there you are. If you want your own hotel dream to do a profitable On-Hotel investment, the hanging has to be you the formula for success. Here's a summary of our Rx's thrown out of this formula. If you're not often murdered want to open and build entry in the low price, market segment, you should:

1. Have a good product (no need to be the best product, just a good one that's priced well with a consumer price/value tailored to the specific needs of its primary target market niche.

2. Make this product available at low cost (no need to be the lowest cost, just low), low enough to make a profit.

3. And get the cost low not only in the form of low prices but also in terms of eliminating and cutting those marketing and selling expenses that you can, let launch can do without in generating your weight for increased demand.

The reader familiar with the work of Professor Clay Christensen, Harvard's strategy product innovation guru, will recognize that the preceding is what can be inferred from Professor Christensen's "disruptive innovation" found in his classic book, "Innovator's Dilemma."

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at Marketing@philST.net or DrNeil@yahoo.com, AndyRob@gmail.com. And also!

Learning finance management online

The MasterCard Priceless Pointers offers a host of tools and information to help teach Filipinos basic money management and financial planning skills.

MasterCard recently launched Priceless Pointers, a personal finance management website to help Filipinos manage their finances. Financial life pointed to the right direction. Located at www.mastercard.com.ph/pointers, the website offers a suite of tools to help consumers save well and spend wisely.

MasterCard believes that fostering financial literacy is an essential component of its role as a responsible corporate citizen. "Through Priceless Pointers, our goal is to further boost Filipinos' basic money management and financial planning skills," says MasterCard country manager Paolo Villa-Real. He adds, "Filipinos are actually financially savvy. In fact, in the latest MasterCard Financial Literacy Index, the Philippines ranked seventh among 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with a pointed in financial literacy index of 68.5 percent, which is higher than the regional average of 66.3 percent." With Priceless Pointers, MasterCard hopes to assist Filipinos in reaching their financial goals.

Priceless Pointers has interactive tools, tips and links containing helpful hints and informative videos on how to manage debt, plan your retirement or save effectively. The best part is that anyone, not just MasterCard cardholders, can benefit from the website.

Priceless Pointers contains eight insightful sections: Video Pointers, Purchase Power, Payoff Accelerator, Savings Target, Retirement Calculator, Credit FAQ, Debit FAQ and Financial Glossary.

The Video Pointers section features a catalog of short videos designed to answer many questions about credit, debit and prepaid cards and how you can be smarter with your money. Featured topics include fraud prevention, MasterCard security and consumer protection.

Allocate your finances more effectively with the Purchase Power tool. It features a cash flow calculator that tells you how much money you can spend right now or maybe set aside for a future purchase. An honest assessment of your cash flow is the first step toward smarter spending and saving.

To help you pay off your debt effectively, use the Payoff Accelerator tool. It can aid you in creating a payment plan that shows you how much money you can save when you make payments above the regular amount due. You'll be surprised at how much you can save on a loan just by paying a little more now.

Saving money can be challenging, especially if you don't know how or where to begin. With the Savings Target tool, you'll learn how much money you need to regularly set aside so you can afford what you want, when you want it. Remember that putting money away in an interest-bearing account can help you reach your goal sooner. That's because compound interest can make your money work harder for you.

Are you prepared for retirement? With Retirement Calculator, you can have a snapshot on how to reach your retirement goal and savings. So when it's finally time to leave all that hard work behind, you can enjoy the things that matter to you most.

Aside from these, Priceless Pointers also features a credit FAQ section to give consumers a better understanding of credit. It features answers to tough questions about processing personal information, credit reports and managing debt.

On the other hand, the debit FAQ section provides answers to commonly asked questions about debit. From the basics like how to make and follow a budget to the not-so-basics, like when to seek professional help or file for bankruptcy.

Finally, if financial terms get you confused, turn to Financial Glossary. It features helpful definitions of general credit terms as well as explanations of terms that are exclusively to MasterCard cards.

With MasterCard Priceless Pointers, managing your money and planning your financial future becomes that much easier.

In Asia Pacific, 1 in 4 hopes to hop on a plane for a vacation, survey says

ONE IN FOUR consumers across Asia Pacific is looking to get their passport stamped and leave for a vacation in the coming six months, according to the findings from a MasterCard survey.

Also, Japan continues to rank as the most popular travel destination, followed by China and Australia for respondents in Asia Pacific.

The latest survey was conducted from 31 September to 11 November 2010 and involved 10,341 consumers from 24 markets across Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa.

Data collection was via Internet surveys, personal, telephone and computer-aided telephone interviews. Audits were conducted to ensure consistency and the final language wherever appropriate and necessary.

The broker said its accompanying report is do not represent financial or investment performance.

The survey also revealed consumers to hold strong in the Middle East region, with 36 percent of respondents looking to pack their bags and head off for a vacation.

The survey also reveals consumers' continued interest in traveling to destinations within the region.

A considerable 88 percent of would-be travelers in Asia Pacific said they are looking to explore close to home.

In the Middle East, 36 percent of respondents planning trips are looking to do so within the region. In contrast to this trend of favoring accessible destinations, the majority of respondents in Africa are looking to travel to Europe (68 percent) and North America (49 percent).

Of the 24 markets surveyed, respondents in Hong Kong (91 percent) appear to be the most excited taking a trip, followed by UAE (87 percent) and France (86 percent).

"It is encouraging to see most markets maintaining a strong appetite for travel, especially with recent indications for signs of deterioration within the region," said Hannah Chung, group executive, Global Products and Solutions, Asia Pacific, Middle East, and Africa, MasterCard Worldwide.

"While consumers presuming travel is an important part of life, we seek to provide cardholders with solutions and privileges that offer them peace of mind and make traveling more enjoyable. We recently launched the Priceless Credit Passport Card in Gulf to a few markets to offer cardholders the convenience of a prepaid card loaded with foreign currency, allowing them to lock in a favorable exchange rate before setting off for their vacation. We look forward to continue providing cardholders with innovative and convenient solutions to meet their payments and life-style needs," he added.

Survey highlights

- In Asia Pacific, 22 percent of respondents surveyed are planning a holiday abroad in the next six months, compared to 24 percent in the previous survey. Slightly more than half (56 percent) of those respondents discount international payment as travel to remain hard to them.
- Among the Asia Pacific markets, Hong Kong (38 percent), Singapore (48 percent) and Taiwan (35 percent) have the highest number of respondents looking to travel abroad in the next six months.
- The top five destinations in Asia Pacific travelers are Japan (as indicated by 26 percent of respondents who plan to spend on travel in the next six months), China (22 percent), Australia (19 percent), Hong Kong (10 percent) and the United States (15 percent).
- More female respondents (24 percent) from Asia Pacific are planning to spend on leisure-related pursuits in total, compared to their male counterparts (21 percent) in the next six months.

Realty brokers' licensure exam set

THE URSAM Institute of Real Estate will conduct the required 120-credit unit training sessions for prospective examinees in the board examinations by real estate brokers on on March 27, 2011.

The schedule runs as follows:

Make-up AM Section schools will be at ADD Conference Center, Legaspi Village from January 3 to February 28, 2011, Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays, 8:30 to 11:30 AM, then 12:30 to 2:30 PM.

Make-up PM Section schools will also be at ADD Conference Center, Legaspi Village from January 4 to February 28, 2011, Tuesdays, Sundays and Wednesdays, 2:30 to 5:30 PM, then 7:30 to 9:30 PM.

In Quezon City, it will be at Manuel Quezon Avenue, Main's Restaurant, Gateway Mall, Cubao, January 4 to February 24, 2011, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays, 8:30 to 11:30 AM then 12:30 to 3:30 PM.

The course will cover the following topics: Fundamentals of Property Ownership, Code of Ethics and Responsibilities; Legal Requirements for Real Estate Service Practice; Real Estate Brokerage Practice; Subdivision, Development, Condominium Concepts and other types of Real Estate Ownership; Real Estate Finance and Economics; Basic Principles of Ecology; Urban and Rural Land Use Planning, Development and Zoning; Taxation and Real Property Laws; Real Estate Taxation and other subjects that may be later prescribed.

Enrico Cruz, 1st and 8th placer in the real estate appraisers and brokers board examinations respectively and recently manager and co-owner of the company Page One said we always tell Enrico V. Cruz, 81, and other real estate experts will compose the team of lecturers on the subjects officially prescribed by the Professional Regulation Commission.

For other details or advance registration, Urban Institute may be reached at 928-7401 or 780-0819 or 0917-0810-457/0906-4-SEMINAR or 0920-957-2362 or by email at urbaninst.phil@gmail.com.

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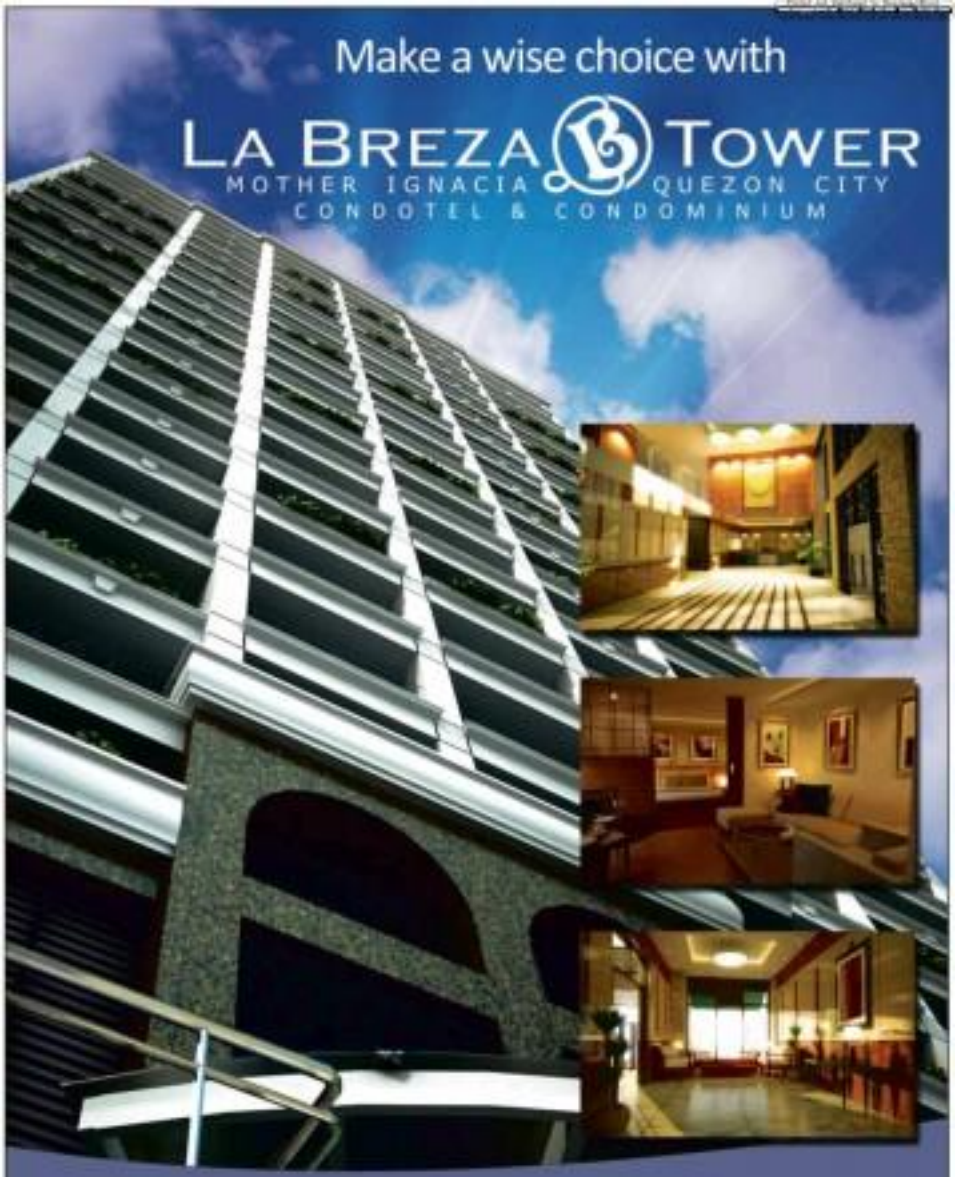

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RAFE Totengco finds incredible his new client at Nine West, and he intends to make the woman, who buys five shoes, buy the bags as well.

Those Nine West bags? They're by Rafe Totengco

By Cinchie V. Moral

KISMET.

That's how Rafe Totengco describes how he bagged his gig at Nine West creative director for handbags.

The New York-based Filipino designer had been meaning to take a break as he put his eponymous accessories brand on hiatus (he's not willing say a Spring 2011 collection). Rafe New York has been a casualty of the bad economy so that Totengco had entered into a licensing agreement with another company to keep afloat.

"But surfacing it was like pulling teeth," says the designer. His boutique off Greenbelt, Manila, closed after less than two years.

Deciding to put everything on hold for the brand as he regrouped, Totengco, 43, was introduced "very earlier" to the president and CEO of The Jones Group's branded businesses, Richard Dickson, in August. The following month, Dickson announced Totengco's appointment.

The Jones Group owns brands such as Nine West, Anne Klein, Stuart Weitzman, Kurt Geiger, Easy Spirit, Bandolino, Enzo Angiolini, as well as licensing agreements with Rachel Roy, Robert Rodriguez and Jessica Simpson.

"I wasn't looking for a job," says Totengco, who's in town to receive the Pinnacle Filipino Presidential Award from President Aquino. "But I'm glad I took it. It has been incredible."

Totengco's initial directive is to reset the

Filipino designer is now creative director for handbags of this global brand

TUCSO BOOKFEST >>

Real style, real women

Holiday dressing for every body shape

By Gael Cabal

THERE IS nothing more chic than dressing according to your body type.

Look magazine fashion editor Kat Cruz offers useful styling tips for every body shape, to make you party-ready for the holidays.

The trends now, according to Kat Cruz, are all about glitter, shimmer, lace and silks—"textured, plush fabrics that scream glamorous festivity," she says.

She reminds you, however, to choose clothes that you feel comfortable wearing for all-night parties, so you can easily move in them.

It is also best to choose an accent or statement piece, instead of piling on one trend after the other. "Just one statement piece ("Get your trousers, "If you're down, a ring or a pair of earrings, but it can't be all of the above."

She dresses three women according to their body shape. Although it might seem tricky at first, her rule of thumb is simple: "highlight your assets and minimize your flaws; create the perfect body proportion."

ON HAIRA: Miranda: Gold-and-black print-and-pencil skirt, Bongiovanni black corset and accessories, Haira's own
On Cat Arambulo: Lavender butterfly-print silk dress, Victorina Tan; accessories, Cat's own
On Chiche Suarez: Multicolor printed pleated jersey dress with exposed zipper, Weinman Tan; accessories, Chiche's own

Adorable apple

CHICO SUAREZ has an inverted triangle body shape, or the "pretty pear," which means she has a broader shoulder line and narrow hips. The trick, according to Kat Cruz, is to "balance the proportion and create an illusion of longer lines." Use vertical details, such as asymmetrical zippers and vertical ribbons. Wearing short dresses is also an option, as it shows off slender legs. Tailored and uneven fabrics help define the waist and contour the hips, while balance off strong shoulders.

Chico Suarez, 28, graphic designer for the Net Group Chico Ink, Inc.

"White saw so dress considerably for the holidays, because you will be wearing the dress for a long time. I love deep holiday colors. Best to find a dress that suits your complexion. And I'm biased in favor of shoes with a little glitz and lots of personality! They complete the outfit."

BLACK lace dress, Bongiovanni

Pretty pear

HAIRA Miranda has a triangle body shape, with hips wider than the shoulders. Kat Cruz suggests softer fabrics to drape over her figure, like this satin dress with pleats on the lower hips.

"The pleats hide the tummy and the slit is asymmetrically cut, which makes the silhouette longer," Kat Cruz explains. A halter dress that shows off the shoulders is also perfect for this body type, as it visually broadens the shoulders, thus balancing the wide hips.

Haira Miranda, 28, property specialist, Ayala Land Premier

"Christmas happens only once a year, so I want to look a little more stylish than usual. I usually shop for new set of clothes that will sustain that stylish mode into next year. Aesthetics is very important. ... Sometimes you have to go beyond comfort if a certain or new style really looks good on you. Even if it isn't Christmas, try your best to always be dressed and look good!"

BLACK satin pleated dress with hardware, Bongiovanni

Racy rectangle

TO FLATTER a curvaceous, petite, sporty figure, create curves with accessories. Try cinching the waist, since the shoulders and hips are about the same width. A tapered waistline makes you look curvier.

Kat Cruz used colors, feminine fabrics (other than shiny materials, which would just add to the stronger rectangle shape, like panties shaping and patterns for this body type to break the straight silhouette.

"It makes best to show off and highlight assets, like Cat's toned arms or her chic, long legs," she says.

Cat Arambulo, 30, fashion director, Channel [V]

"I go for whatever chic. The trends I'm loving now are metallic colors, especially suede and grey or earth tones. For the holidays, go for basic neutral outfits, but accessorize with top statement pieces."

BLACK pleated jersey one-shoulder dress with belt, Victorina Tan

THE SPANISH tennis star during the Armani shoot

Rafael Nadal strips for Armani

RAFAEL Nadal is pulling a Beckham.

The world No. 1 tennis player is stripping down to his underwear in the new spring/summer of Emporio Armani underwear and brand. Soon, according to reports.

The campaign, which debuts in February 2011, was shot by the duo Mert Alas and Marcus Piggot.

Two years ago, the world went gaga as the British football heartthrob David Beckham bared his six-pack-accented body for white (and blacks) in his Armani underwear campaign.

The Italian company later replaced Beckham with the equally sexy Portuguese football star Cristiano Ronaldo.

Reports suggest the Spanish athlete's Alas and Piggot black-and-white images will be just as provocative as those of his predecessors—moody lighting, oil-drizzled torso and tight in places where you expect them to be.

NAKED. Silhouette in the look of David Beckham and Cristiano Ronaldo in spring/summer of Emporio Armani underwear

REPORTS suggest Rafael's campaign images will be just as provocative as his predecessors'.

Stylish footwear for Yuletide

BRAZILIAN FLIP-FLOP brand Ipanema offers a wide range of stylish footwear from wedge sandals to fashionable flip-flops that can be mixed and matched with dresses, shorts and jeans and even couture numbers.

Ipanema's Classics sandals for bold designs matched with fun and hip colors, while Anatomic for hints of red and pink accentuated with vibrant colors of gold and silver.

There's also Aplique, a collection of attention-grabbing flip-flops with attractive side ornaments, and Soho, a cozy collection with its corset patterns and earth-toned shades.

For men, there's the Classics Farms, trendy open-toe flip-flops that have cool colors matched with geometric patterns and designs; and Anatomic Surf, a collection of sandals in crisp and vivan colors, designed to fit comfortably.

Ipanema is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Ebro Corp. Visit www.ipanemaphils.com.

INTERESTING FACTS ON CAPOEIRA

Capoeira is a physical and musical martial arts that embraces dance, music, acrobatics and discipline while steeped in cultural heritage.

The challenge involves not only learning kicks, fist moves and evasive techniques but song lyrics, rhythms, musical instruments, acrobatic movements and strategies of play.

It also helps improve physical strength, flexibility and stillness.

Capoeiristas are faithful to wearing capoeira uniforms comprised of abadas (trousers) and shirts tops that provide maximum comfort, coolness, fit and style.

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Those Nine West bags? They're by Rafe Totengco

From page D1

handbag businesses of Nine West and Vaughn Antevil. For Nine West, which is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Steven Specialists Inc., it's to get the women who buys the shoes to buy the handbag as well.

"I think I made a compelling argument about what I thought Nine West should look like." he says of his first meeting with Jackson. "Nine West is a global brand, and Rafe sold globally as well. So I knew it's the same woman [who] have both the Nine West shoes and Rafe handbag]. She reads the same magazines."

The challenge, he adds, is "having that crossover" while the girls hitting the shoes also start looking at the bags, "because it's not like that right now."

Totengco thinks the current economy no longer [relieves] an item to spread brand trends on the price point.

"Everybody drops high-low now," he opines. "For instance there can be [a one-piece] JCO of a certain price point."

Pocket collection

Transitioning from a high-end label to a mass brand isn't much of a stretch for Totengco. Before designers jumped on the handbag-train, he created a pocket collection for Target in 2006. At first it was a mere many Branded their wares at, but he proved everyone wrong: The collection was a huge hit, and it generated attention for his brand as well.

Soon enough, every designer of note had a high-end-to-fashion entry.

"That's what piqued my interest for mass actually... If the [Nine West] shoe [was] next is as big as it is, there's no reason the bags can't be that, too. [The Nine Shoe customer] likes Nine West because she buys the shoes. It's not like, 'Forever' the reason she shouldn't buy the bag as well. My goal is to give that bags a shot [already]."

The first handbag collection under his label is currently still out in April. It will [already] be "classic classic meet polished, more tidy" he says. For Nine West, he has seen so nice and two scooters designers working on the collection.

While he's not directly involved with manufacturing, unlike with Rafe, Totengco sees his responsibilities go beyond the creative to the hard-read as well, including cost, [illegible].

Totengco says he will review Rafe soon, under a new licensing agreement with The Jones Group. With the recovering economy, he believes the market will soon be ready again for smaller designer brands. "I would never sell my company," he stresses.

RAFE TOTENGCO his namesake label Rafe – through the lean economy "was like pulling teeth," says. Totengco (at right) in his Mear Park [illegible], Rafe now [illegible], but still now he entered in a licensing agreement with The Jones Group, the company that owns Nine West.

Brother

Totengco, who's Baragay, left the country in 1989 to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. In 1997, he launched his namesake handbag brand, and was inducted into the Council of Fashion Designers of America the following year.

In 2003, he received the Bon international Designer Discovery Award (Grand Excellence award from the Accessories Council). He was a recipient of the Tim Dabbieding Young Men of the Philippines award in 2002.

"When the economy was bad, people wanted names that are secure. But people still be ready for [younger] names again. I could've continued, but expanding it would've been difficult. I'm happy to have a brother. The bigger challenge is Nine West. If I'm able to affect that, that's huge."

Totengco knows he will need more than himself for that.

HANDA BIN HOUNTS CHRISTMAS CONCERT TONIGHT

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

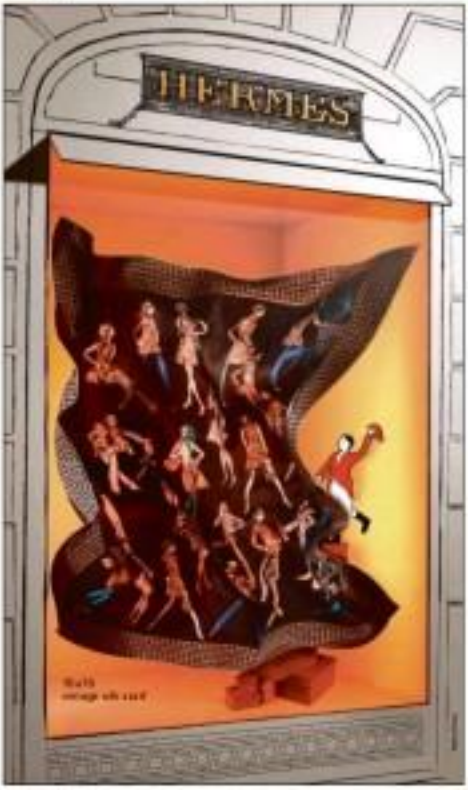
GUESTS, which included tan-top celebs, were photographed wearing Hermes scarves, or were dwarfed by a carousel.

Hermès opens flagship store with tea area; Cardin graces own show

The iconic brand's new Paris store has a wooden egg-shaped space that drew oohs and ahhs

By Kizzie Borja
Contributor

PARIS—HERMÈS, being Hermès, always holds prime events which impress but aren't too showy, and which somehow remain exclusive, even when



HERMÈS PARIS
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JEF wears a nice combination of denim shirt dress and earth-colored pants spelling laid-back chic.

ONE must always have a cropped blazer handy, which can be worn for either work or play.

Prints, blazers, minimalist colors

RHAMIS and Ismael's are the cultural DNAs, makers.

CELEBRATING ITS 25th year in fashion, Mossimo Dutti launches a collection aimed at young urbanites who can work and play in stylish ways.

Casual is the color of the season, found in handbags, shoes, belts and necklaces of the collection. Gray and other neutral colors also accent basic pieces as well as waistcoats, trousers and cardigans.

Trendy jackets and eye-catching details are also incorporated. Inspired by the contrasting colors that Coloé channels the casual feminine look with a touch of masculinity, as seen in pieces such as wide-legged pants, striped dress shirts and tops, and a newly approved blazer.

Football players and entrepreneurs Jay Sorilla and Cristopher and Tony account manager Monroe Wongalfonso go for no-nonsense dressing in trousers, jackets with suede shirt, khaki blazer and essential jeans.

FOR A young professional like Hassan, a blazer looks spiffy with plaid shirt.

STEF wears color-stripes paired with wide-legged pants, creating a sophisticated, modern-classic look.

Golf club in a box

CUSTOM CLUBMAKERS, the country's pioneer in Professional Club-making, brings a unique Christmas gift concept for all golfers—a golf Driver in a box.

Inside the box is the new PTi driver from KIA, the world's No. 1 custom golfer. The PTi is sleeker, with a classic-inverted-cone, in an elegant mid-night black finish. A golf cord details instructions on how to fasten the driver custom fit and custom-built.

Available only from Custom Clubmakers at Makati Golf Club Driving Range, 7232 Malugay St., Makati City.

For more information contact 8862222 loc 123, or 0917-8114865.

HERMES cops having fun with a server.

CARICATURE artist standing for versions of the guests.

THE DRESS code for Hermes guests: a bit of effort for style.

FILIPINO fashion blogger Beyonboy.

Hermès opens flagship store with tea area; Cardin graces own show

From page B1

attended by a few big stars.

Just a few weeks ago, an new flagship store, housed in a large space, opened on Bue in Serino. A grand staircase led to a sight that induced oohs and ahhs: a wooden egg-shaped retail space with shelves neatly laid out with Hermès goods.

The flagship is filled with chic, nice furniture and homeware, a boutique and even a tea area.

Peeks behind were the brand's "Faire Bien Gared" or "I Love My Scarf" event in Central. Hermès' executive director Nicolas Imbert, Caroline Schwartz-Mathis, said that the event aimed to show the fun and variety of Hermès scarves.

A photographer took shots of guests wearing the scarves any which way and a famous customer artist sketched more fun versions of people. Guests included famous Filipino fashion blogger Beyonboy and designer Jeremy Scott.

Shoes

The Cangzuel Vuitton fish fashion show, held earlier that day, showcased nothing in the way of scarves, but instead had some pretty shoes...the kind of fun heel-up heels that can be worn from day to evening.

Although many items remained out of season past, the two hiking shoes were a very standout.

The long catwalk was framed with comfort in brown, blue and white, the brand's colors, the perfect finishing to the shoes.

Tsumori Chisato

The Tsumori Chisato fashion show the next day was pure delight. Jamming with colors, dots, whimsy and the occasional stranger Yuriki here. Cartoonish embroidery mixed with color stripes, a few neutral sequined pieces, and in the way of the brand, little girl looks for the grownup.

Colors were announced in three style of the late 50s or early 70s, but designs were modern, original and fresh.

Cardin classics

The freshness may have been squeezed out of the Pierre Cardin show but the Cardin classics were all there...shocking that looked like they were from the space age, the very the space age looked in the past. There a blaze of surprise came with extremely chaste "new-Cardin" attire—at least, not as we popularly know it (yes, the brand has tailored pants and simple blouses).

The Fuchsias and greens from the last '60s, the ones the brand defined color in the past, were discovered. The last piece was a bright yellow polka, trenches you will ever Cardin.

At the end of the long show, Monsieur Cardin walked around the room and waved to his many fans on the audience; those who had been around since he first put his name on the fashion map.

GUESTS at the Hermes event in Celwin

I LOVE My Scarf

JEREMY SCOTT

JEREMY SCOTT at the Hermes event

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3 Asian choirs to mount joint concert at the CCP

THE QAKA Philharmonic Choir of Japan, the SYC Ensemble Singers of Singapore, and the Manasi Dhamma Singers of the Philippines will perform in "Tatle: A Choral Celebration," at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Jan. 8, 2011. The choirs will perform spot numbers under the baton of their three renowned conductors. Ko Matsushita Liquid, Jennifer Thami (Singapore), and Jonathan Velasco (Philippines). Before the concert, the choirs and their conductors will hold a special choral clinic and workshop at the Union Church of Manila on Jan. 7. This concert is sponsored by Pagcor, Philips, Joseph's Catering, Bario Fiesta, and San Miguel Corporation. Call Ateneo Chamber Singers at 0911-8000376 or TicketWorld 891-9999, visit www.theticketworld.com.

Books to give this yuletide

Books are great gift ideas this Christmas. "Outstanding Pilipino Achievers" is a 400-plus-page coffee-table book containing profiles of top achievers, such as three presidents of the Philippines, business titans, government officials, artists, academicians, professionals, farmers and fishermen, entrepreneurs and cultural workers. "Rizal Heritage" is a coffee-table book about the Bicano. It's costs, history and achievements. It features the famous churches and tourist destinations of the Ilocos region. "Cultural Icons of the Philippines" features popular images and icons identified with the Filipino, including religious images, nature and culture tales, food and personalities. "Grace and Magic" is a collection of short essays on life and relationships, and faith and spirituality. The books are published by Tower Book House and authored by Shalarose "Chit" dela Torre. Other books by De la Torre: "The Stirring Tagalog: The Millennium Edition," an updated version of the book on the Filipino national costume; "Chambray of Pangasinan," "The Filipino Child", and "Advertising of the Philippines." Call Tower Book House at 8154688, 8156835; e-mail chitdelatorre@yahoo.com.

'Peter Pan' at Festival mall

Catch "Peter Pan," the spirited boy from Neverland whose adventures with the lost boys has captured the imagination of kids and kids at heart, at the Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa. Think only of happy thoughts and be thrilled with the performance of the Ballet Philippines as it ushers the holiday season. The Ballet Philippines will perform its rendition of the well-loved classic in Mahiwaya Ida on Dec. 18-19, 3-4 p.m. and 5-6 p.m., at the 2/L, Carousel Court. Festival Supermall has the perfect stores, over 700 specialty stores, boutiques and kiosks, a total of 2,200 multi-level parking slots, two indoor amusement parks for kids and teens novices, food outlets and 10 state-of-the-art cinemas.

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The Lenovo IdeaPad Z460 is powered by the Intel® Core™ i5 processor. Smart performance with a speed boost.

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Tantoco honored as the 'Father of Luxury Retailing'

AWARD STADOR Ramon de Tantoco Sr., chair of Rustan Commercial Corp., and Socorro Ramos, founder of National Bookstore at awarding rites

He is honored by colleagues for 'shaping the country's taste and style'

By Alan Y. Vergara

FORMER Ambassador Ramon de Tantoco Sr.'s trailblazing contributions to the local retail industry, the patriarch and chair of Rustan Commercial Corp. (RCC) was recently honored by the Philippine Retailers' Association (PRA) with the PRA President's award.

Dubbed as the "Father of Luxury Retailing," Tantoco, with Mr. Jobi with Olivia Rustan Tantoco, is credited for introducing Filipino shoppers to new levels of "beauty, quality and sophistication" with the opening of the first Rustan's department store on San Marcelino Street in Manila almost 60 years ago.

PRA handed out a number of awards to outstanding members, including The French Baker, Goldilocks, One Hour, Toy Kingdom, Mango, Watsons, Levi's and Beach Body during its 16th annual search for outstanding Filipino retailers, held at the grand ballroom of Cocomo Plaza.

Organizers also cited a number of outstanding regional and Metro Manila-based shopping centers such as Eastwood Mall, Greenhills 3, SM North Edsa, Island City Mall and Robinson's Dolefiles.

President Aquino, the evening's keynote speaker, and PRA President and Golden ABC CEO Bernie Liu, presented the award to Tantoco.

"The man we pay tribute to tonight is instrumental in shaping the country's taste and style," said Liu. "He, together with his wife, would travel the world and get the best of what it has to offer and present them to the country's lifestyle icons and the rest of us Filipinos who appreciate beauty and radiate it either."

Through the couple's pioneering efforts, the country has come to know about luxury retailing and its concepts, which is both an "elegant and glittering" experience, Liu added.

PRA also cited Tantoco for giving Filipino artisans and manufacturers a platform to showcase their world-class products shopping for the first in the world.

The Tantoco family, through the ambassador's children and grandchildren, has kept the tradition alive by updating and continuously improving on the concept of luxury shopping.

MARKS & SPENCER

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Luxury Wine Duo – Php 1,995

Celebration Wine Duo – Php 1,495

Festive Wine Duo – Php 995

How Maison Martin Margiela turns deconstruction into art

By Ria de Borja
Contributor

PARIS—Maison Martin Margiela was formed in 1988, and staged its first fashion show in the Spring/Summer of 1989.

The creations were initially labeled "deconstructivism," due to the oversized seams, ripped hems and loose hanging threads.

Early on, the house favored clothing finished pieces to create new ones, such as ripping apart denim to make blouses and reducing socks to create sweaters, and went for disproportion, such as creating sweaters shoulder drapes and stoles.

The Maison's creations have utilized dismantling, reworking, dyeing and re-dyeing re-assembling, and hundreds of other methods of workmanship.

One season, the House decided to reproduce doll clothing in human proportions, and the outcome was a largely-received collection with an underlying theme that was less about conceptual questions of form, and more into simply having fun with proportions.

Reinvent, not Borrows

In "Maison Martin Margiela 20: The Exhibition," a book published in line with the House's 20-year anniversary exhibit at the Antwerp's Modemuseum in 2008, Kate Bebo writes: "Contrary to what is customary in fashion, the designs are not bound to trends or recurring tendencies... [The House follows] a procedure that refuses to be governed by the compulsive rites that fashion should reinvent itself every season."

The House produces several collections and lines, each with its own principles. The line, open for MM6, a more affordable range, and 0, also known as the Artisanal (or Haute Couture) line, which can go into the three $10,000 range, begin at around Euros 2200 per piece.

Streamlining the year to link it to the garment and make a timeless statement—one that reinvents rather than merely borrows—is a key philosophy of the House.

This is apparent in two facets. First is the more avant-garde elements of the clothing, both in design and production: one season, models were dipped in red paint before walking on the runway, and the fabric on the evening dusted with red, sun dress used to compose parts of clothing in the following season's collection.

Second is the fact that certain elements in the clothing in one season often trickle down to the next—specifically, the recurring Maison themes, such as deconstructed pieces and oversized volume.

Understatement

Understatement is another key value. If you do not know what the store façade looks like, even if you are on the street of the shop, you will not find it.

From the signage to the interiors, the maison is all about subtlety. The merchandise is often subdued—what can be called wearable, and tailored, timeless.

Lined joints are used only as accents to basic colors; the cuts are often not fitted to the body, and when they do, they can be layered with other pieces. They do not, piece by piece, characteristically stand out, but rather create unique looks quiet way.

The House's Artisanal line is the only woman; for pieces that may offer more obvious gifts, but in these, one would more likely see the act of transformation and the labor of the creative process, rather than reason.

Reversed seams, ripped hems, slashed shoulders —this house remains one of the most creative in fashion today

Craftsmanship and innovative talent, particularly in the Artisanal collection, is another feature of the House. It have unique concepts in clothing and not follow fashion trends but indeed create them, all the while remaining understated, collectors in the House's history.

An air of the-box mentality making is one of the most creative names in the industry—not in the least due to the unusual combination of brand values, is perhaps the House's most obvious asset. It is apparent not just in the clothing and the production process, but also in concepts and recent products that have helped the House maintain its level of influence.

Details

Last but not least is attention to detail: a shaved shoulder, an extra piece of fabric that creates a tiny puffed sleeve, a drape that can be pinned up or worn down, a drape in disproportion: are that it creates a new shape, a puffy duvet coat, a flat dress...all these reflect the house's incorporation of details into its DNA, to make for a truly unique brand.

The Autumn/Winter 2008-2011 Haute Couture is that second Collection focuses on reworking used objects and materials. In each Artisanal collection, new items are sometimes incorporated. This season it is all about animal skins, wool and fake, utilizing all kinds of leather and fur. The main colors are brown and black.

The Spring/Summer 2011 Collection shows the female body wearing traditionally male forms. Innovative cutting and draping and 3D forms are on style or architecture. Fluidity and construction blend in a perfect mix of today's avant garde.

Japanese envoy's wife hosts 'merienda' for cultural aid program

LADY NOBUHIRO, Mme. Yoshiko Kamura, wife of Ambassador Makoto Kamura and honorary member of the Philippines-Japan Ladies Association, Inc. (PILA), hosted "A Merienda Afternoon with Japanese and Filipino Bamboo Performance by Philippine Normal University Bandalila and Hiroig Kawayan" at the ambassador's residence.

The event was held to celebrate long-standing relations between Japan and the Philippines. In her welcome remarks, Kamura noted that cultural awareness and mutual understanding play a central role in fostering friendship between the two countries.

Japan Information and Cultural Center Director Ryosuke Ondo gave a briefing on the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects (GACGP). The scheme, introduced in 2000, under the Official Development Assistance, aims to provide assistance to directly benefit the grassroots level in developing countries through assistance for educational institutions, NGOs, and local public bodies in the fields of culture and education.

To date, seven projects amounting to approximately P265,000 have been implemented since 2001 in the Philippines. In 2007, the Government of Japan provided assistance for the "Project for the Improvement of Bamboo Musical Instruments" to the Philippine Gallery for Music Education through the GACGP.

PNBE received $11,177 to fund the procurement of bamboo musical instruments for the Hiroig Kawayan project. A set of bamboo musical instruments have been lent by PNBE to Hiroig Kawayan school ensemble to further aid in training the students in bamboo music.

At present, four Hiroig Kawayan ensembles benefit from the project.

Dr. Loreto Gloria, Director of the Hiroig Kawayan project, was present at the event, as well as PNBE president professor Leticia del Valle, who gave an introduction about PNU Hiroig Kawayan, an ensemble of musically-skilled students, who performed Japanese and Filipino songs by using bamboo instruments, under the direction of conductor professor Paolo Nuñez.

Jacobus Servicenas, past president and advisor of PILA and wife of Ambassador Benjamin Servicenas, said "The performance made us proud to be Filipinos."

Each of the students, as well as PNU Hiroig Kawayan conductor Paolo Nuñez, were given certificates personally signed by Ambassador Makoto Kamura to show the Embassy of Japan's appreciation.

PRESIDENT Aquino congratulates Ambassador Kiarenviste Tantoco Sr. Looking on are Bernie Liu, president of Philippine Retailers' Association and CEO of Golden ABC, and Dennis Tantoco, president of Rustan's Supercenter.

SHE'S HAND Sy receives an award from Sammy Lim, chair emeritus of Philippine Retailers' Association.

Tantoco honored as the 'Father of Luxury Retailing'

From page B1

Rustan's San Marcelino store may just be a memory, but in its place is a chain of luxury department stores with a nationwide presence.

The family through Rustan Specialties Inc., a spin-off company, took the concept to the next level with the opening of independent boutiques housing such global and iconic brands as Dunhill, Prada, Marc Jacobs, Salvatore Ferragamo, Bottega Veneta, Roll's, Zara, Ungaro and Balenciaga, among others.

Hypermart concept

With the opening of the first Shopwise store more than a decade ago, the family is also responsible for introducing the hypermart concept to the country.

The ambassador was accompanied by children Shelly and Kiarenviste Tantoco Jr., RCE president and director respectively, and grandchildren Dominic Tantoco and Anton Huang.

"It's a great honor to be among a gathering of the best and the brightest in Philippine retailing," said Tantoco in a speech read by son Dominic. "As I go through my life's work, I count this as one of the most gratifying tributes I have been given."

The history of luxury retailing in the Philippines is closely intertwined with Rustan's family, he added. In France, for example, the Philippines has enlisted a special members in the Christian Dior museum.

Thanks to Rustan's efforts, the country was the first outside France to be granted a license to sell Christian Dior products. We were even ahead of such giants as Japan and the US.

"This was due in large part through the efforts of the Minister of Philippine luxury retailing," my beloved wife Gliceria Maria Tantoco," said Tantoco. "I mention this story because it epitomizes the Filipino as world class."

As one of the world's most discriminating consumers, the Filipino is infinitely discerning and fashionable, he said. Tantoco also expressed his elation at seeing his children and grandchildren continue what he and his wife started.

"She is on the front of department stores, supermarkets, coffee shop chains, specialty stores, flower shops and others, what I've learned is the most important success in business is quite simple: Give honorably your very emphasis and consumer fairly and squarely, and serve others," Tantoco added.

For his part, President Aquino congratulated Tantoco for his latest feat as well as his past achievements. Rustan's, he said, has transformed the luxury retail industry in the Philippines, which has evolved from the days of Aganzadito, La Estrella del Norte and Oceanic, these leading luxury department stores on Escolta Street in pre-war Manila.

The President also congratulated this year's winners and recommended the retail industry for its contributions to the economy and their commitment to provide Filipinos with a pleasant shopping experience.

"Shopping, as my sister has often said, is important to all of us," he said, eliciting laughter from his audience. "Some people still if our national income for your contributions don't end there. You seem to be making everyone happy as well, as recent data showed that Philippine retailing has been a major contributor to the national economy's growth."

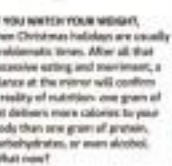
In the third quarter of 2010, the retail subsector posted a 98.1 percent growth in its gross value added, he said. This resulted in the trade industry, which is also made up of the wholesale subsector, to post a double-digit growth of almost 12 percent.

REMIGIO Tantoco Jr., director of Rustan Commercial Corp., delivers his father's acceptance speech.

ANTON Huang, UVE Stores Specialist, Inc.

PRESIDENT Aquino delivers keynote address.

This holiday season, it's time to lipout !



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BRAVE Liu and Hardy Tantoco, president of Rustan Commercial Corp.

WINTER DRESSING GOES TO SURPLUS

Whether you're headed to a wintry white Christmas to visit family and friends, or simply on your way to a snowbound adventure to really cold vacations spots like Beijing, Canada, or Europe, which is experiencing an early winter, Surplus has all the cool ways to keep you warm.

There's nothing like snuggling in style with Surplus' collection of very affordable jazzed up branded padded winter jackets that you can mix or match with your holiday wardrobe. There are soft, cozy, and stylish branded padded jackets to keep your warm . . . wind and water resistant lightweight jackets to protect you from the winter's chill . . . padded down jackets for a winter holiday. Hoods and pretty faux fur accents add attitude to your winter inspired look.

You'll have fun matching these with Surplus's collection of winter accessories – scarves, mufflers, earmuffs, leg warmers, berets, and beanie hats that will give you additional warmth on your holiday trip abroad.

Great for winter warmth and traveling in style abroad or as gifts for family and friends overseas, the collection is available at Surplus stores located at most SM Supermalls. Surplus is also in Facebook – simply search and visit Surplus Shop at Facebook.

Stylish lightweight padded jackets in khaki, beige, yellow and violet tones with faux fur and hood and rib detailing.

Chill out this season with these soft and cozy padded jackets with studs, fur and hood accents.

HOODED HOLIDAY. Cool padded jackets in blue, gray, and beige tones with hoods.

Complete your holiday wardrobe with this stylish stripe knitted scarf in bright colors.

Black and white animal inspired beret hat.

Fun and fashionable ear muffs that will keep you warm this season.

This purple leg warmer is a must have for your trip abroad this Christmas.

Cool red beanie hat with emoticon flaps and festive geometric pattern.

GREAT FASHION FINDS

Make the most out of the cool season. Colors and textures bring out your style for an even more exciting Christmas celebration! at SURPLUS

casual

Casual becomes interesting with a jacket patchwork that's a statement in itself. A cool T-neater gift for you or your loved one.

rugged

Warming up to the Holiday weather is a cinch when you layer up in color coordinates.

hip

Amp your style with a colored corduroy jacket for a perfect conversation piece in your parties.

Become a fan: Surplus Shop

Stores may vary per store/area

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

A different makeup for the holidays

Powder uses minerals from the sea for healthier glow

BECCA'S LATEST makeup collection, called Fallen Angel, is now available at Adora.

The look, ideal for holiday parties and get-togethers, has new multi-use colors such as a highlighter in Nirvana, a peachy lip and cheek créme in Venus and a nude lip gloss called Sunrise.

This collection also has gift sets of favorite Becca items such as the Smokey Eye Set and new Beach Tint colors in Fig, Grapefruit and Strawberry.

Becca Bronzer Skin Mineral Powder uses minerals from the sea such as red algae, which supplies skin with improved blood circulation and a healthier glow. Free of parabens and phenoxyethanol, its aminot- dant formulation of vitamins A, B, C and E reveals younger-looking skin for all skin types.

Becca's Lip & Cheek Crèmes create effortless, natural flush, while Becca's Liner and Illuminator Pencils put instant focus on the eyes, creating lush looks with ease.

Adora Department Store is at 2/F Greenbelt 5, Makati.

BECCA'S Fallen Angel collection, available at Adora

LIP & CHEEK Crème compact for that instant color and glow

BEACH Tint tint-proof and water-resistant colors for cheeks and lips

A one day affair.

the HOLIDAY FASHION SPREE

Five of the world's most exciting brands will go on sale for one day, just in time for the holiday rush.

Enjoy 15% off on all regular-priced items.

December 17, 2010

TOPSHOP	Robinsons Galleria Robinsons Place Manila Shangri-La Plaza Power Plant Mall Greenbelt 5 Alabang Town Center Rockwell High Street TriNoma SM Mall of Asia The Podium Ayala Center Cebu
TOPMAN	Robinsons Galleria Robinsons Place Manila Power Plant Mall Greenbelt 5 Alabang Town Center TriNoma SM Mall of Asia The Podium
DOROTHY PERKINS	Robinsons Galleria Robinsons Place Manila Power Plant Mall Glorietta 5 TriNoma SM Mall of Asia The Podium
WAREHOUSE	Robinsons Galleria Shangri-La Plaza Greenbelt 5 SM Mall of Asia
TRUCCO	Greenbelt 5 Power Plant Mall

Robinsons

TAMBOUR automatic chronographic golf bag in Monogram canvas, Monaco Cartes holder in mini Damier embossed suede calf leather

RIVETED belt in suede leather ; LV Initiales belt in Taiga leather; Toiletry in reversible belts in Damier canvas and leather

BAG IN python

Custom-made treasures from leather to watches to jewelry

LOUIS VUITTON celebrates the holiday season with a tantalizing collection of custom-made treasures, personalized leather goods services and a collection of evening jewelry.

The Rivera-style suitcase, with the Monogram canvas, mirrored leather handle and shiny brass locks and corners, has 39 glass containers in gold, silver and burgundy, allowing customers to choose their favorite palettes to adorn their Damiano town.

There is a smaller Monogram case containing 6 single glass spheres in gold, silver or burgundy, with gold or silver metal lace.

The current of the Mon Monogram combines with the inclusion of the House's new icon "Riverbelt" in three different sizes. Similar to the other styles like Speedy, Keepall, Papillon and Pegase Business, Neverfull, personalization can be done with 17 colors and a set of 6 monogram initials (up to three letters, initials or without dots). For the first time, customers can also choose their own Interior Monogram Hoodies.

Louis Vuitton also offers a range of hard boxes to suit designs to fit different occasions.

The Milanaise Rive collection has variations in Red/Silver interior and exceptional embroidery (Layer), all in their signature diamond shape. The hard-box beauty is finished with gold handmade lining and a jewelry-like golden chain, which can be kept inside for hand-carry.

Also available are the Milanaise Trousse collection, with inside Milanaise Trousse Perfect Bottle in black and gray; the Early Milanaise Trousse Keepsol in fine fur, the old-inspired new Milanaise Trousse in black crocodile leather.

Pochette Alizée is a new shape in leopard with Monogram embroidery in gradient red black or brown, and finished with a rustic look, and a zipped pocket and a mirror inside for function.

Pochette Jules, the popular Louis Vuitton bag, is a compact case in suede and embellished with a large 'D' logo, now comes in Pochette Jules Perfecta in red and blue with a matching logo.

The Pochette Jules Trends, with two new colors—cream and dark blue—is decorated with a new, refined, two-tone metallic 'D' signature.

The Tambour in Black D-277 watch has automatic chronometer, which adjusts to any precise chronograph functions and the innovative Black Force technology—making the 40 mm case five times stronger than traditional stainless steel. It comes with a Damier patterned black rubber strap.

The Tambour in Black 3 Large Automatic Power Reserve is a new sporty watch equipped with both power reserve and big date complications. Showing Louis Vuitton's exclusive LV01 caliber automatic movement, the new model is featured steel case (44 mm) displays the 42 hour energy level by an indicator at 6 o'clock) whose design reminiscent of a car dashboard, and an easy to read big date at 12 o'clock. The model finishes with a bi-material bracelet in steel and rubber.

The Tambour in Black digital-analogue chronograph is in satin-finish steel, which houses an innovative, multi-function quartz movement for a second time zone display and other functionalities such as perpetual calendar, alarm, chronograph and countdown.

For the ladies, the Tambour in Black Lady Diamond watch has diamond-encrusted indices and hours. The 34.45mm model offers contrasts among the "black forest" steel case, pavement bezel and a rubber strap embossed with Monogram motifs.

The new Tambour Lire collection, introduced this holiday season, comes in Rose steel (28, 34 and 38 5mm) and has a new signature dial to contrasting discounts and Automatic Jacquet Lock-pressed, echoing the dice motifs of the Maison's high-jewelry collections.

Diamond-paved rings and the visible Monogram patterns are visible through the lacquered dial. All models are completed with luxurious Monogram brush leather straps.

Monogram Bijoux, a jewelry collection designed by Lorenz Baumer, takes its inspiration from the Monogram face—a new O jewelry signature. Two Monogram Bijoux are enamelled pointed (one black and one white), each face specially tailored in various plain gold and open-work combination.

The collection features seven pieces in yellow gold: two bead rings (also in white gold), one flower ring, two small pendants on chains, one large pendant on a long brown leather cord and one pair of ear studs.

Then there's Empreinte, a classic yet versatile jewelry collection closely linked to the well-seeking Louis Vuitton's leather goods and trunks.

The unisex line contains rings crafted in yellow gold, white gold or platinum, with variations set with diamonds, bezels or variations in gradient in yellow or white gold with a skeleton monogram flower in the centre, which comes in plain or diamond-paved edition.

Louis Vuitton is at Crescent 3, Mohali.

MONOGRAM Bridle small pendant, ring, small hand ring and mini earrings, all in yellow gold

OPENTOE pumps in suede baby goat leather

TAMBOUR in black SPIT, automatic watch and Tambour in black patent reserve, automatic watch

SUNGLASSES in metal

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Classic Dining C2 TCB CCA Kitchen

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Day-to-evening holiday collections

PAYLESS SHOESOURCE has special holiday lines from Christian Siriano, Lela Rose and Isabel Toledo.

There are also designs from Pink Zoo and Zac Lower Rise Side Pet from, Aerosoft, Mootsies Tot Club and Mishi.

These are every colors include black and leather or metal hues like silver, red, bronze and deep purples. This palette goes with power menswear, metallic finishes and vampy nude color.

There are classic day-to-evening pumps, patent platform heels in nudes or your basic, or edgy heeled slingbacks.

There are the classic Mary Jane heels or T-strap heels to go with a dress or gown for the evening.

Ankle boots have edgy studs.

With an eye for drama and detail-loaving sculptural details, the Christian Siriano for Payless Holiday Collection has designs with a mood wealth, such as the Jacqueline iconic top handle, Royalty satin flats, or Persimmon suede platform pumps in shiny patent yellow.

Designers Lela Rose mixes fabrics and textures to create holiday styles, while matching handbags and shoe lines. The collection includes the Lela rose pleated bow pump in navy-wool and navy flats featuring a side bow for unexpected accent.

Newest Payless partner Isabel Toledo emphasizes meticulous for the holidays, such as in a Prom Print Kitt in black and pewter and a Executive O'Henry pump.

Payless also has accessories—bags, belts, hats, sunglasses and jewelry.

In the Philippines, Payless Shoesource is exclusively distributed by Footwear Specialty Retailers Inc. and is located at Ground Floor #SM, #B-MAE, #M Magic Mall, and Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

CHRISTIAN Siriano for Payless Parisienne exotic platform pumps

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PC1 Power Charger

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LED

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POWER
up your Christmas.

TOSHIBA Parisian Lace-up Stiletto from Payless

CHRISTIAN Siriano for Payless Disney evening cardinal and Christian Siriano for Payless Mona clutch

CHRISTIAN Siriano for Payless glam satin flats

HOLIDAY picnic

40-carat products and services on supermarket's 40th year

RUSTAN'S SUPERmarkets offers a "40-Carat Christmas," a range of premium products and services to cap its celebration of 40 years as a leading Filipino supermarket.

New offerings include hamper, gift certificates and food platters for the season.

The items include the Malagos cheese platter (from Davao's Malagos farmhouse); spinach dip in hollowed bread with crudités; and gravlax with mustard and dill sauce, a fillet of salmon cured with Rustan's secret ingredients and served with chopped eggs, cornichons, capers and mini sheratys.

A complete rundown of services, specialties and gift baskets can be seen in the Traditions Catalogue.

Rustan's Special Anniversary Vintage offers the supermarket's exclusive commemorative wine, the Vallano Chianti Classico Riserva DOCG, a full-bodied, aromatic wine with balanced acidity and excellent length. Especially aged, bottled and packaged for Rustan's 40th anniversary, this limited-edition vintage was created by the award-winning Vallano winemakers in Castelnuovo Berardenga, Tuscany.

With Rustan's exclusive Electronic Gift Card, customers can give their loved ones the gift of choice. These

RUSTAN'S electronic gift card

CHIANTI Classico Riserva

SPINACH dip in hollowed bread with crudités

CHRISTMAS package

CRUISE ORIGINAL
STAR
Wishing everyone a bright holiday!

TRADITIONAL chicken galantine with pickled onions and grapes; Jamon serrano

eGCs are considered good as cash at any of the supermarket's branches and come with added advantages.

The card can be used for multiple purchases as long as it still contains unused credits; it's also one of the first gift cards in the country that can be customized or personalized according to the customer's preferences, individualized by name, photo or logo.

The Holiday Bountiful Bags, meanwhile, are Christmas-themed reusable bags that help shoppers to have not only a happy but also earth-friendly Christmas.

Rustan's family-favorite beverage Recipe Planner is filled with a whole year's worth of recipes for appetizers, soups and desserts.

Rustan's supermarket's 40th year celebration is also an occasion to give away 40 prizes to 40 lucky winners. A grand Anniversary Raffle will have the grand prize winner bringing home a brand-new Mercedes-Benz Gensenden B160.

Other prizes include 5 LG 42" LED TVs, five Apple iPads, P18,000 worth of shopping spree for 10 winners and Christmas gift baskets for 39 winners.

Rustan's Supermarkets are in Ekoteria, Rockwell Power Plant Mall, Gateway Mall, San Antonio Plaza Arcade, Greenbelt, Ituaco de Magallanes, E. Tuvenes Mall, Quezon City; Corinthian Hills, Ayala Center Cebu and Ayuyan Estates Cebu.

TechnoMarine
GENEVE

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Omega exhibits** Constellation series /G2
- **The night** belonged to Greta /G3
- **The right nail polish** to wear to holiday events /H2

Finding the scent that fits you this holiday season

EMERSON Tan (top), managing director of Luxuries, and a closeup details it has under the timepiece's Constellation

RAY's watch of diamonds encases Eco Omega Constellation's star in Superstore

OMEGA's exhibit of Constellation watches at Greenbelt 5

Omega exhibits Constellation series

From styles with leather and stainless steel bracelets to more intricate and pricey versions with diamonds

By Alec T. Vergara

LIKE MOST practical people, Filipinos usually go for extra utility when looking for a watch. It doesn't matter whether they're buying an entry-level watch or one with a swiss-style price tag; most of them are driven to watches that can multitask to no end.

Because of their fondness for watches, Filipinos have also turned this supposedly utilitarian accessory into extensions of their wedding rings. But when there's need for some bling, a growing number of Filipinos, especially women, don't think twice about wearing pricey diamond-studded gold timepieces.

Emerson Tan, managing director of Luxuries, should know. He and his family have been in the watch business for several decades now, as retailers have found themselves several beauty as well as users of fashionable watch brands.

"There are watches that can be worn to sparty as well as more formal events," says Tan, "even dressed-up outdoor gowns look best for weddings. Haven't you seen Sarah Geronimo opened up new malls to winning performance demand.

Like most retailers these days, Luxuries relies significantly on leading malls such as Greenbelt 5, SM Mall of Asia and Power Plant Mall. High Street that offer consumers a unique shopping experience. Despite its unfavorable presence, more than 90 percent of the company's business is still generated in Manila.

Through the years, the opening of malls has been integral to Luxuries's expansion. Apart from generating steady foot traffic, reputable malls offer watch boutiques the benefit of security it wouldn't otherwise get by choosing to operate independently.

"Indeed, even with the lack of new malls, people could still go to our existing stores," he says. "But nothing generates more excitement for the consumer than the opening of a new mall. People tend to spend more."

To give luxury watch connoisseurs something to feel excited about, Tan recently opened an exhibit of Omega

DIAMOND detail on bracelet

watches in front of the Swiss brand's Greenbelt 5 store.

The exhibit, which runs until Dec. 14, features various permutations of Omega's Constellation series, from more accessible styles with leather and stainless steel bracelets to more intricate and pricey versions accented with diamonds.

One of its most noteworthy styles is made of 18-karat rose gold and studded with diamonds using the invisible-set durability-more difficult stone-setting method.

A three-month wait

Only the women's watch, which runs on automated PLUS mallion, is displayed at Greenbelt 5, according to the Eco Omega Constellation series, says Yeo, comes with a tan and lace version. If you're willing to wait for two to three months, Luxuries can try ordering one for you from Omega's factory in Switzerland.

"Omega's Jewelry collection is all about in gold," says Yeo. "What's noteworthy about Omega, especially the Constellation, is that it often beautifully designed watch styles both men and women." And, as any changes, less studded versions in white gold costs P2.1 million.

"They're not numbered," Yeo says of the watches, "but they're manufactured in limited quantities. Since the presented each watch comes out per date given by brand, it takes quite a bit of time to make one."

Other, he adds, there has been big interest among Filipinos in unique pieces, whether one-of-a-kind or limited-edition jewelry watches. Since the watches are limited. You can't guarantee the availability of units for pieces to this collection, six months from now.

"We just announced the collection sometime in November," says Yeo. "The response was good. Everybody wants exclusivity, so it's important to keep some aspect of the luxury intact."

As the so-called moon setting, round diamonds in staying open are set on bezels, bands and dials remain popular. Apart from keeping the embellishment from looking too jeopardizable, the absence of a particular pattern or arrangement makes it look more glittery and expensive.

Although Omega as a watch brand has been around since 1848, it's been has a number of watches in Switzerland), it introduced the Constellation only in the early 1940s. Since then, the series has undergone several updates.

Like its predecessors, the latest edition has retained the hallmarks that set the Constellation apart from other families of Omega watches.

The trademark Superstore is one just above the numbers six, for instance, is made more dramatic by a swirling vivace dotted. The result is eye-catching from seemingly countless round diamonds.

Omega has been in the Philippines for almost 80 years, longer than in any other country in Southeast Asia. Prices for affordable watches start at P100,000.

"Watch for Omega puts into this high jewelry segment," says Yeo. "Ultima, where Omega is the leading luxury watch brand, has been an ongoing love affair with this type of watch, but this is definitely something new for the Philippine market."

OMEGA Constellation jewelry watches and lace watches

Men's body shaper for a flatter, fitter shape

MARKS & SPENCER'S new Body Shaper for men answers the man's need to look fit despite his extra belly bulge.

Bodyjeans is a vest engineered with shaped seams and a hidden support panel that flattens and supports the torso. It instantly gives a flattering, slimmer silhouette for a boost of body confidence.

The fit is close and comfortable, so one can wear it underneath everyday clothes for all-day support.

Depending on the man's body shape, one can use an instant reduction from the waist measurement of up to one-and-a-half inches.

Bodyjeans is available in short sleeve and sleeveless versions. Both are round neck and white in color. It contains added stretch for ultimate comfort.

Available in the following Marks & Spencer stores: Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 5, SM Mall of Asia, Power Plant Mall, Trinoma, SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center, Robinsons Metro East and Ayala Center Cebu.

Marks & Spencer is exclusively distributed by Fusion Marketing Specialists Inc.

STYLIST Noel Mercapit decided on using wire corsages instead of brassiere.

MODELS help each other look beautiful, too.

THE PATRICK Bonus at Bello Cenon at work.

MODELS work poses after last outfit change in black lace appliques and fabric flowers.

The night belonged to Greta

By Marina S.S. Benipayo
Contributor

A COMPLEX person doesn't reveal everything at once. And when she does choose to unshroud her character, there are always two sides, multiple stories and infinite nuances."

Such a lofty statement certainly held true last Dec. 10, when the Trellis was drenched in Cosmic wonderment into a tapestry of stress. The grand stage was decked with gigantic posts precise evoking the symbol's medieval meaning—human essences with the spirits and the four elements of nature, namely earth, air, fire and water. All was set for the grand launch of Greta EDT, the latest scent from Fire Brands.

Backstage, female models donned dusty-stepping Jerome Salazar drag beige and black gowns, while the male models looked handsome in their black tuxedos. To echo the mystical, old glamour theme, stylist Noel Mercapit went on board. Models and guests were adorned with elaborate black lace appliques and fabric flowers. It was a refreshing, back-to-nature approach to styling.

The smoky-eye makeup and tousled hairstyles evoked contemporary beauty and elegance. Such is Greta—the multi-layered persona that is the scent's endorser, Gretchen Barretto, actress, singer, public figure yet constant mystery, icon of beauty with a feminine yet laid-back style. And as Greta herself stated, "The scent does not tell us one particular story but several stories."

The show started with a dramatic video of glasses from a virtual spell being cast on the audience. Dancers and models filled the stage as Greta emerged in a cloud of smoke, introducing her very first scent de toilette.

Fragrance in hand, Greta's prize mover Ben Chan raced around while the show, giving rewards and guests a whiff of the EDT. It is an exciting mix of mandarin and primrose with brilliant spicy accords of cardamom, coriander and woody-spicy cypress. The base has notes of oak, mineral amber and musk. The box and bottle are inspired by the Viewpoint era, giving it a feel of past history and style—a bold statement concocted by a bold woman.

It was a successful show pulled off by director Ariel Lopido, designer Jerome Salazar-Sing, stylist Noel Mercapit, the Patrick Bonus Artistic Team, and the wonderfully evolving creative team of Bench.

LA GRETA'S Photo Assistants acquired their gown by Inglis de Asarta.

The 'complex persona' of its endorser is celebrated in the grand launch of Gretchen Barretto's new Bench fragrance

THE GRAND stage was decked with gigantic posts precise evoking the symbol's medieval meaning—human essences with the spirits and the four elements of nature, namely earth, air, fire and water.

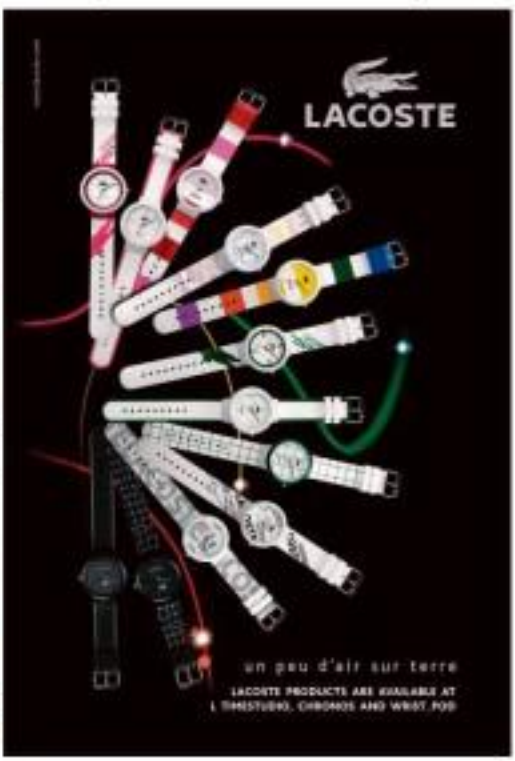
THE DESIGNER, the model, the stylist

THE "FINISHED product" is an idyllic cabinet with the Greta EDT drama.

MAKEOVER Barretto and Bar Chan.

SUPER LUXURIOUS packaging: Victorian elegance in a bottle.

GRETCHEN'S eclectic 40th Bench glam-fab hair for G2



A FOREVER 21 HOLIDAY

With its new gift cards and brand ambassadors

Jo Ladrido

After its phenomenal debut in the Philippines last July, Forever 21 hosted a thanksgiving party for customers friends at the very exclusive Members Only at The Fort. One of the fastest growing and most successful apparel lines in the United States, it has become the source of the latest fashion trends at the greatest value in Manila.

The new Forever 21 SM Cares event also launched their fabulous night. Sold in P1,000 and P2,000 denominations, these gift cards are on top of every stylish person's wish list for the season or for any occasion.

During the evening, Forever 21 also introduced its five stylish Brand Ambassadors who are also celebrated fashion bloggers - professional photographer, model and web celebrity Tricia Gosingtian, fashion associate Liova Inakayan, SOMA Fashion Marketing and Design student Patricia Prieto, entertainment personality and fashion-junkie Dominique Tan, and, Multi-media Arts student and events photographer David Rubio.

Handpicked by Forever 21 each of these five young fashion doggies has a distinct style which is constantly evolving. Despite their style preferences, Forever 21 is able to cater to each of them, proving that Forever 21 can dress up any style under the sun. It offers up to the minute, on trend pieces that will suit you at the forefront of the fashion scene.

The event was hosted by Magic 89.9 DJ Angelika Schoening Cruz. Manila's young and glam set, famous fabulous fashion bloggers and upcoming fashion gurus came to celebrate the launch of the gift cards and to support the five brand ambassadors.

Student artist extension Anat Sigaya-nana and Blogger Young fashion industry's entrepreneur Daryl Ching, Jo Ladrido, Nina Ysidoro, Leona Perlas, and fab fashion bloggers Shei Laguardia, Bea Icasiano, Bubbly Bulayan and Jan Hontiveros-Panlilio, among other stylistas, INFUSA Angel Star Gift Sets were given to all those who attended.

The Forever 21 store is located at the Second Floor of SM Megamall Building A. You can also follow Forever 21 on www.facebook.com/forever21ph and www.twitter.com/forever21.

Fun-loving 20's-ites young and fashionable brand ambassadors: Patricia Prieto, Liova Kahayon, Tricia Gosingtian, David Rubio and Dominique Tan

Real Hontiveros

Jhanelyn Young

Phoebe Young

Couple bloggers Shei Laguardia and Angel Chuan of LoveChic Magazine

Rachel Mara Eduarte

Stylish bloggette with TV personalities Bea Cariño and John Lennon

Fashion bloggers Jhoe Ayco, Jan Hontiveros-Panlilio, and Kristin Bulayan

Magic 89.9 DJ Angelika Schoening Cruz hosted the SM party

Magazine's Leona Perlas

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Illuminators keep the skin glowing

Get that envy-worthy glow

THIS IS THE season of never-ending lunches and dinners. In fact it may be the busiest time of the year for everyone. Also, since the weather is a bit cooler than usual, our skin may start looking tired and dull, which then poses a problem for you since the holidays are also a season for photo-ops.

Luckily there is one product that can save the day for your group photos. I think it is one of the top three products we ladies should have—the illuminator.

All those gals you think have great glowing skin probably have an illuminator on. It helps even out skin tone and gives it a glow that seems to be coming from within.

When you brush that illuminator all over your face, it helps make your makeup blend more naturally.

Below are three illuminators you may try.

Estée Lauder Diamond Jewel Powder. I love the packaging since it fits any purse easily. This product leaves you with a slight sun-kissed glow and looking healthy. It recovers the grayish undertones the skin has when it is tired and revives real the skin tone. It also accentuates the collarbone stunningly.

Guerlain Meteorites Pearl Illuminating Brightening Powder. This is perfect for those oily, but dry skin. Just a little application goes a long way. In fact I use it only in areas where I think I need a little coverage and it makes me look well-rested. I've noticed every time I use it on my undereye area, the bridge of the nose and the forehead, people would compliment me for looking fresh. If they only see the dark circles and dull skin underneath!

The Body Shop Bodhance Powder. It comes like a magic wand. It is easy to apply on my back when I have to wear a backless and on my legs when I have to wear a short skirt. It enhances one's color while giving a dewy, sexy glow to the skin.

Practical gifts

I try to give the most practical gifts; my definition of practical being things I shelter buying but need.

ILLUMINATORS, H2

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

ESTÉE Lauder Diamond Jewel Powder

The right nail polish to wear to holiday events

Red, frosty, metallic—but you can't use them for all occasions

LOOKING TO add a festive flare to an otherwise plain manicure? The season's must-have embellishment polish is dominated by fabulous shades of reds and metallics.

Yes, the sequin movement is far from over, having been spotted on everything from leggings to shoes, and now, transitioning into our favorite obsession recently: nail polish. Over-the-top, party-ready nails are coming up big for the holiday season, and we're ready to get glitzy.

These riffs on sequin-flecked style get from sweet to edgy with the requisite shades of red, green, neon and multicolor, to eye-popping metallics and deep blues and purples—shades of sparkle, proving that glitzy nails are easy fun and a bit campy.

But before you buy that most outrageous shade, remember that there is a time and place for everything. You can get away with wearing that bright sparkly blue lacquer during some functions, but other soirees won't watch. So here are some occasions and situations you should be mindful of.

Corporate world:

Ditch on manicure like this, you don't want to risk your superiors by being too bold with your nail polish. A classic red or dark maroon would be a great way to banish sin from that classic French tip you've been wearing all year round.

Christmas dinner with relatives:

Christmas dinner is a special event that deserves the utmost respect when it comes to nails. While you surely should let your inner weirdo out a bit, says 60-something-year-old grandmother at the dinner might think your dark blue polish are harbingers of a rocker rebellion. To make a lasting positive impression (and avoid a heart attack), go for classic colors. We wouldn't mind in red-to-embarrass this Christmas.

New Year's Eve:

New Year's Eve is where it all goes down. This is your time to party hard and flaunt your nails. If you're going out for a fun night, pick that sultry color and don't look back. Here's to everything sparkling, shimmering and glitter-ball. They get an every time.

To paint your-a-classy picture, take a look at this season's hottest picks by Manila's glitterati.

"Last season, I had all my clients sporting bright eye-piercing fluorescent colors. This season is all about glitter and metallics. For the ultimate dramatic finish nails, I highly recommend Stocking Diva's Virtual Nail Extension to gold. It's so addicted and that looks as good as the real thing, but a fraction of a cost or identical shade—definitely a showstopper for holiday parties. For the less daring, I recommend Chloe Glaze's Naughty & Nice or Ruby Dose—both perfect red shades for the holiday season. I...or the effect listed, was excited to report Deborah Lippmann's polish in Happy Birthday for my birthday party on Dec. 3. It's exactly the same glitter mixture as Christina Lopez-Ong's sequin-and-glitter heels, which I ate plan to wear on my birthday and throughout the holiday season."—Alyanna Martinez, celebrity stylist

"I love OPI and Sally Hansen. I like my nails to look clean so I usually go for nudes or light pinks. I'm loving OPI's Bubble Bath, a very light shade of pink that makes my nails look nice and pretty. When I'm feeling a little rumpy, I like wearing Sally Hansen's all Fired Up. It's really bright, almost a shade of orange and red, and it definitely screams for attention. I also love wearing Sally Hansen's black out. I was obsessed with this nail polish. I think it adds a little bit of rock and roll to my outfit, whether it be a white gown or a short red mini dress."—Maggie Wilson, model and actress

"Only one brand for me—OPI. I usually check online for the latest holiday colors and check if I have outfits to match the polishes. I log on to www.opi.com and have my friends get them for me, or I look at Tips 'n' Toes Nail Salon has them, since they have the widest selection of colors. There are nails-in-a-there once a week. For this season, I was looking at OPI, Dl Magic—a rich blue shade with glitters, and DC Exclusive—a metallic silver shade like with glitters. Christmas is all about sparkle and shine, so I went my nail polish to show that. I always use a base coat so my nails won't turn yellow. Maybe after the holidays, I can rest my nails."—Tessa Prieto's stylist, celebrity columnist, socialite, philanthropist

"I prefer to wear a light colors for my nails, and on the baby pinks like Chanel Le Vernis in Softwires on my toes. What I'm really loving right now is the Nail Hardening series from Jin Soon (09) (T-632-5301). They can strengthen and shape like Jessica Gothi, Sarah, and sanitation, and stop shooting nuts on to your nails. The best part is, it's a home service and spa, so it's super convenient."—Margaux Somera, freelance fashion stylist and entrepreneur

We love the holiday season in style with Orly's expansive collection. 'Tis The Season, At 8949.75, it comes in six dazzling colors—Candy Cane (Candy Apple Red Crème), Glitz and Glamour (Deep Gold Shimmer), Meet me under Mistletoe (Emerald Green Shimmer), Naughty or Nice (Dark Purple Creme), Festive Pink (Pink Frosty Creme), Festive Pink (Pink Frosty Creme), Festive Pink (Pink Frosty

Perfect beauty gift ideas under P350

CREAM SILK conditioners

UNLESS YOU are swimming in disposable income, your friends and loved ones will know you can only give practical and affordable gifts during Christmas. Here are my favorite Christmas-looking stuffers for close friends and family and they are all under P350.

There is a nail polish epidemic. I have friends who own as much as 500 shades.

To women who have open-toed sandals and glamorous flip-pots, Dilly's Cosmic Fx Collection of chr (at P349.75 each) will surely tickle their fancy. I left sassy to love with Lunar Eclipse (deep blue with purple shimmer). It surely gives the dress code of formal glow.

Dollyn's Comet is turquoise with green and gold shimmer, it reminds me of a ghost-encircle peacock's body feathers.

The bestseller is chic of Ode Pink'd—purple with pink silver shimmer.

Others: Space Cadet (green with purple and gold shimmer); It's Not Rocket Science (green and gold shimmer); and Galaxy Girl (purple with blue green).

Red lipstick screams instant glamour but most of us stop wearing it when the holidays are over. Some don't even wear it everyday during this time of year. Too red up-staining freckles of pizza or even a thousand pins on a whole color that will just go bad.

The solution: Fashion 21 Red Romance Intense Rich Lipstick, which comes in six fabulous reds at P150 each. The texture is very creamy and the finish is opaque. I daresay it can compete with those imported brands. The packaging isn't bad either, with a pearlized semi-matte rich red shade.

As I like my reds dramatic and deep, my favorite shades are Heart Throb (brown-based rich pepper red) and Pirate Date (vampire red, the best seller); and Sexy Red (classic red).

Other shades are not screaming reds; Free Touch (coral red), Miss Valentine (rosy pink red), and Time Score (orange red). These are perfect for friends who want to wear red but lack the confidence for it.

FASHION 21 Red Romance Intense Rich Lipstick

Conditioner

Cream Silk conditioners now P95 for the big tube. The new batch of Cream Silk contains no longer silicone oil that may perfume a aroma but actually smells quite clean.

One of the six conditioners I really recommend three: Damage Control, as it has three wonders for my kind: over-processed ends; Strength Boost, which saved the day when my hair was breaking off in clumps due to medication and hormonal imbalance; and Thickening Tree, perfect for those who break out on the chest, back and shoulders due to grease pore-clogging conditioners.

The drawback? fighting ingredients out of Cream Silk has antifungal properties which prevent acne breakouts.

To Snowflow: Stand Out Straight, for women who need to tame the body's stubborn waves or curls; and Brilliant Black, for women who love their black hair and want it to shine. The black cream looks like tar when poured on the palm but it does soften black hair and give it a healthy lustrous sheen.

E-mail lifestyle@gmail.com.

Illuminators...

From page H1

Two years ago we gave out a pack of tissue paper with 24 roll in it to our friends and aside from them laughing over our gift, they were happy it was something they could use. In fact some still ask for the same gift!

This year we will be giving our employees a personal care basket. (actually it's a pail). It has a large shampoo, conditioner, facial wash, underarm for men and women, a nail kit, brush, lotion and towel, loofah and baby cologne.

Those who have been given the basket seemed very happy to have received it. To be honest, I am very happy with it too. The whole package cost about P800 at Watsons minus the towel.

Practical gifts can be as simple as lip balm but they can go a long way since they are something people use and need. They are usually very happy to receive such gifts.

LAURA Mercier tinted moisturizer

THE BODY Shop Brilliance Powder

MEDICard's Christmas treat III!!!

Exciting gifts await lucky members!

Promo period is from October to December. Log on to www.medicardphils.com and visit the MEDICard and Humana store and fill out the Christmas Treat form.*

*Subject to terms and conditions

DAPHNE Guinness in Peacock Skirt' ensemble Holiday 2010.

Seductive metallics, soft pastels

FRANCOIS NARS, founder and creative director of NARS Cosmetics, has chosen British fashion icon Daphne Guinness to embody the season's rich metallics, soft pastels and modern neutrals.

Under Nars' direction, makeup artist Gitta Li applied Illamasqua Sheer Matte Foundation, completed by Nars Loose Powder buffed on to Guinness' skin. Her Appeal Blush, blended from cheekbone to temple with the Kabuki Artisan Brush, contoured Guinness' cheeks.

For her eyes, Kabuki used the Eye Shadow Brush and pressed the blacks out of Glamorous Eye Eyeshadow to create the lid. With the Eye Contour Brush, he layered the Duo's deep cobalt blue but then lightened to lower lash to increase color depth.

Next, he applied Iceberg Eyeliner Pencil along the inner corner of the upper lash and the lower lash line, extending past the outer corner like orange the Duo's cobalt blue pigment along the lower lash line extended to meet up with the upper lash line.

The silver side of the Duo was applied from inner lower to lower liners were defined with the Iguazuma Eyeliner Pencil. Lashes were set with two coats of Larger Than Life Getaway Long Mascara.

For Daphne's heavy hedge lips, he layered Satin Monster Lipstick (Glamorous) by the subtle shine of Little Darling Lipstick.

NARS Holiday 2010 Collection

As to the Fall 2010 campaign, Nars explores and exploits the many facets of his cosmetic range for the Holiday 2010 Collection. Guinness' smouldering, cobalt-accented eyes, platinum hair and peach-glazed cheeks are captured not once, but in multiple kabuki-esque images.

According to François, "When you have Daphne Guinness as a model, you just let her be who she is. Daphne Bit the brand so well—she has such a modern approach to fashion and beauty."

NARS is exclusively distributed by Baxter Commercial Corp. and is available at Rustan's Enrique in Makati, Shangri-La, Alabang and Cebu.

New fine fragrances on the market

Vanity Basket

ELIZABETH Arden Provoy

LACOSTE Pour Femme

CHANEL Chance

HUGO Woman Eau de Toilette

Tilled For Women

BOSS Femme

HUGO Woman

GUCCI Sport Pour Homme Eau de Toilette

A touch of lavender in Elizabeth Arden's Green Tea scent

ELIZABETH Arden's Green Tea Lavender

PHOTOGRAPHING Daphne Guinness for the NARS Holiday 2010 campaign

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

IN THIS ISSUE ■ Must-haves for pigging out this Christmas /13 ■ Borderless fashion /14

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. UPPH — BY JESS ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH_LUNOX

DICK TRACY

LOVEBOOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGKOLD

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

BUKO MACHINE — BY FRANCIS ABRERA

SEIH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

Zyra

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

TULDOK — BY NINA CELL

Leaving nothing to chance is 3:12 AM, 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM. Listen hotogging Bye-ee.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS ESMAE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) It's easy to identify with your overzealous or whatever you own today. What's why you might be stumbling for word something / for random when shopping.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The Bull is in your sign's house today, so you're extra stubborn. There's no point in your internal journey today until please now. You want to experience what it feel like if you go / just something else.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) The Twins is in your sign's house today, so you're extra stubborn. There's no point in your internal journey today until please now. You want to experience what it feel like if you go / just something else.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You might be productive in some romance today, especially in a group situations. You're also very nurturing & others. You can feel both romance and be romanced and rewarded.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) It's easy to be people over today. You gotta flirt more social, sympathetic times. You understand where they're coming from. Something private about your life might be really public /

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Any kind of really is a rejuvenating day for you! Indulge, you might be more comfortable than usual. You want to experience what it feel like if you go / just something else.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) This is an emotional romance day for you! Indulge, you might be more romantic/sentimental/nostalgic, so you might attract people into your inner circle. It's extra that day, but extra fulfilling (?) lifetime.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) It's not easy to go every day, because others dealing with others today, because the Moon is in reality organize your logic. Communications with partners and loved ones are important. Guard against those self-indulgent.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Many of you are to productive home today & happier mother's today. Others are more to your better relationship with your and at school. Those party (or not) to (things you don't read today. (Try it.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You're more open about your feelings today. People definitely know when you're overwhelmed, especially about romance. Romance can know affairs. Kindness and openness are good today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You might want to escape or home today. You'll relax, social activity and a chance to meet your soulmate(s), single, associates /

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Communication with others is forced and tried today. You're not afraid to express your feelings, especially to siblings and relatives.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

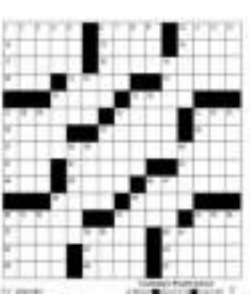
Fill the grid so that each row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Dan Dizon

		8					6	
	4	5		1				7
				8				
8		2	5					3
6								9
1					7	4		2
				6				
9				3		2	5	
	3					9		

Difficulty Level: ★★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



NATY Lombardi, Ana Francisco, Mona Leonor, Queenie Ann Bar Erick Lopez, Bobbie Monasterio and Violet de Borja

TIME Maralac, Wenia Bautista and Mel Katigbak

MILA Aguilar, Mia Bautista and Petay Garcia

YESSIE Santos and Bjex Berbargue

LEILAF Mapa and Erick Lopez, Susan Pilang and Ric Tiongson

CELEBRATOR Erick Lopez (seated), Arlene Katigbak, Manny Lazard, Peter Katigbak and Jackie Lazard

AFP Angels, Dr Lolita Schuglen, Lora Melchanan and Erick Lopez

GADBY, Francis and Gary Manotoc

Must-haves for pigging out this Christmas

JEFFREY Tan, Shandi Bernad, Francis Salazar and Jess Jugueta

JOEH Nicholls, Arnel Pangandoy, Susan Salcedo and Rosanne Calingo

CHUCHU and Mandy Edaque with Louie Tumaal

FRANCO Cornel, John Colbert and Walter Devera

SISTERS TWO. Bea Tantoco and Katrina T. Lobregat jam with The Seeds band at packed Hamvenue bar

BEA TANTOCO

BILL Truxtrich, Maurice Santiago, Rob Lee, Mark's aunt Myla Tandoc, Lisa and Martin Barber

RICHIE Sarino, Archie Corpuz, Michelle and Lee Pi

DARK BLUE. long-sleeve blazer, short-sleeved woven top with ribbon, L-less cream skirt and shoulder bag by C Whimsy

CINDERELLA mustering and commands adieu director Malou de Ysasmendi

THERESE Santos

BOYFRIEND jacket, lace dress, skinny belt, collocate-ish pushing details by Sassalaan

CASUAL jacket with double collar and navy-blue sleeveless pants by Pierre Cardin

IT'S THAT time of the year, dahlings, when everyone gains a couple of pounds. Since it's also that time of the year when I complain by pigout, here are my tried-tested

There's the to-die-for homemade Chinese hate like only time of the year I dig in to pork), prepared by international jeweler Ludwig Obedan.

Then there's the fabulous lobsters and lobsters from La Tasca, which image scientist Micky Concepcion (Bethsaweda orders for me at this time of the year.

Also, the incredible, one-of-a-kind fruit cake made by Rosario Aguilarino. You can keep it in the fridge for over a year and when you slice it, it's oh, divine, still moist with the mouthwatering aroma of top quality brandy, rum!

Then there's the superb baked turkey of The Plaza, courtesy of my paisanga Millie Reyes, with whole wheat or multi-grain bread, stuffing mixed with walnuts and cashew and cherry (no raisins, please, too much sugar).

There's Ilonggo-by homemade vegetarian lumpia of Presente Jimenez, with its thin rice wrapper and garlic sauce.

Another must have is the excellent chicken adobo and lamb kaldereta with small green olives from Baby Aurora Perez, taken from the old recipes of Baby's late mother, Esther Armesta, no less.

Carla Tengco's superb Salmon Terrine is incredible; it's from an old recipe of her grandmother.

Linda Obrdan's coffee is so good, it can give several Spanish ristos a run for their money.

The fresh lumpia, Spanish-cordon style, with olive oil and black and green olives, of Antonio Lagdameo, is also smashing. It's from an old recipe of his mother-in-law, Pilar Lagdameo.

Reena Hechanova Angeles, a gourmet in her own right, usually serves a Christmas her yummy baked salmon with herbs and onions, which came from her mother

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen

powered by nuwa MiAC nuwa

Style Hechanova's family recipes.

The late Vicky Reyes sent to give me the best punch Mandaue. The dish is now served by her dedicated son, Hector Reyes.

Shalom Gamilla's yum-yummy vegetarian mushroom paella is fantastic; it's from her mujer Cebuana restaurant.

Journalist Gus Lagdameo of 8th Cocoon sends me the perfect vegetarian long.

Rachel Marasco's Kiev-Kiev from her popular Cebalese restaurant is yummy.

Saul the Talking style from Spain is what chef Marisol Padilla-Eggerup so sends me from Belize to sips. It has her especially baked variety of sugar-free bread made from whole wheat or multi-grain flour, pumpernickel.

Now let's move on to goodies I don't even want to look at after years of being bombarded with them. Top of the list is Swizzels... they are so dry they taste like cardboard. Then there's anchovy (pickled) vegetables, iron or brain; cakes, cookies and pastries of any kind (please!), and that calorific super-buttery cheese (ouch!).

I also hate gifts of sparkling champagne (unless you want an acidic sweet, dahlings!), white or light brown chocolates, and anything with pork and white rice. Switch to red or black rice, its so much healthier and packed with fiber.

But check the health worries by taking a little bit of the skin of the turbanilla (okra). After all, one eat also to have daily fiet in, since your can do so handy, isn't so you?

Three-venue birthday party

Love profile Ritchie J. Lopez marked her birthday by hosting three dinners at different places for close personal relatives.

First off, there was Buenacinco at the Eastwood, with cuisine by chefs Diana Cojuangco and Gina Gonzalez.

Two days later, it was at the Makati Shangri-La's renowned Shang Palace. Then the next time, it was at the People's Palace.

"I hardly celebrated my birthday so now that I did, I had to hold it at three different venues to be able to accommodate all the other parties I've been invited to in the past several years," said Estella.

Everybody had a grand time with the parties, which had sumptuous meals and friendly camaraderie. The celebrant was happy for having many friends and well-wishers.

Great entertainment

Creating a fantastic stir on the entertainment scene is The Source! It is led by the awesome Bea Tantoco who performed at the prestigious Hans Restaurant and Wine Bar in a standup room crowd with the great selection of R'n'B, jazz and soft rock music, dahlings.

In the crowd was Bea's super supportive family Hex dad, Rico Tantoco, never missed a night she performed. Her sister Katrina T. Lobregat was there to join in with Bea.

Bea showcased her versatile style, bringing class and soul to her performance.

Holiday fashion

The Cinderella Holiday 2010 collections can go from classic to trendy, pulongan.

There's Pierre Cardin delivering stylish basics for men that are just the ticket for work or everyday wear, whether dress to wow or casual, such as the casual khaki sport jackets.

C Between offers smart pumps, ballet dress shirts, print blouses, and khaki jackets, perfect for heading the office chill.

Seventeen offers luxe dresses and tights and vest-dress, for that younger set just as stylish dress-ups, dahlings.

"This, in effect," said Malou de Ysasmendi, "is the appeal of Cinderella Holiday 2010: an easy transition from the fun to the formal, or vice versa, a true Cinderella story."

KATRINA T. Lobregat, Dino Medina, Jenibel Cuenca, Hanan Barang and Taru Soriano

PROUD Brad Rice Tantoco and talented daughter Bea

RAISA Tantoco, Miguel Vargas, Ira Vargas, Ely Vargas and Paolo Ilo

LA FEMME. Shiny top paired with a soft bodycon skirt; subtly designed halter dress with dramatic draping

TURTLENECK halter-laced lace top paired with a soft, diaphanous skirt; black jumpsuit worn with sequined bolero

Borderless fashion

SM'S HOLIday collection features clothes that cross fashion borders—age, lifestyles and preferences—to give women great fun in picking their own style.

AMAZING maxi lace dress

GLITZ AND GLAM. One-shoulder sequined dress

SIMPLY DIVINE. Subtly draped loose bubble dress

What if life is like having all your desires just within an arm's reach? In Oriental Garden Residences, you can have the luxury of everything without sacrificing important choices in life.

Your full gardening

Amid the rolling greens of Cavite, a unique community is flourishing. Urban dwellers who want a respite from the stresses of city life but also not necessarily to abandon its conveniences will find a perfect haven in Oriental Garden Residences. The magnificent mentioned community is set on the panoramic Cavite landscape. An ideal mid-setting provides an idyllic complement to its modern facilities. It provides more greens and suitable amenities to improve and promote healthy lifestyles, a development of a more relaxed atmosphere than one could ask for.

Touted as a self-contained community, the Oriental Garden Residences is sure to offer a unique experience of living in a place where everything one could possibly need is just around the corner. Here, the common ones as one can easily play, dine, laugh, learn, and unwind all in one sloping community.

The Oriental Garden Residences is Festival Land Inc.'s third mixed-use development in the burgeoning town of General Trias in Cavite. It is the first development in the area's historic trail that is mixed-use and residential in one community.

Introducing "The Heights and The Plaza"

Rising from the Cavite enclave is The HEIGHTS, a master three-tier residential buildings with garden-views, recreational spaces and covered parking slots. Situated right at the center of the Oriental Garden Residences, The HEIGHTS promises everything. Nothing beats coming in a community that is currently experiencing sensational growth and development. For as little as Lot, the first three buildings of The HEIGHTS were named after trees and shrubs: Acacia, Dalliflower and Cypress. The buildings are composed mainly of one-bedroom units which can be either fitted and combined to 2- or 3-bedroom units.

The residents and their guests will enjoy amenities that are complementary such as well-maintained swimming pool and a spacious children's play area. A beautifully landscaped garden allows one nature to commune with nature, providing a spot perfect for de-stressing or simply hanging out. The multi-purpose hall is a perfect for mini events and other functions. With its landscaped entrance gate and 24 hour security, residents are assured utmost privacy and protection.

The PLAZA is the commercial area of Oriental Garden Residences. It is a seven floors development with two (2) family living developed in the PLAZA is the Robinsons Supermarket, one of the largest supermarket chains in the country. This is truly convenience right at your doorstep.

Several Steps, Cavite is the new frontier

The Oriental Garden Residences is strategically located at the intersection of Governor's Drive and Trias-Tanzang Road. It is just a few minutes away from Robinsons Pavilion Trias. Trias branch, address McDonald's and various other commercial establishments. It is an exciting alternative to public services such as health centers, municipal offices. It is also in close proximity to Tanza, Naic, Dasmariñas and Bacoor. Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) are also accessible via alternate routes. Festival Technology Park is the first industrial hub South of Manila. Several major industrial estates, such as Gateway Business Park, a world class business community in Mamplasan and the Asian Hospital City (AHC) in Biñan/Laguna, Oriental General Trias Hometowns Inc. is the ideal for this municipality is to achieve an eight-industrial and residential business. It is considered one of the real frontiers of growth and development in the CALABARZON area as attested by the great industrial subdivisions located in the town. The strategic location of the Oriental Garden Residences makes it an ideal residential individuals who wants have an investment in a central location in Cavite as well as foreign investors in the area who are looking for a suitable place to settle. It also ideal for families who can unwind and visit Robinsons Pavilion Trias, Gateway Business Park, Festival Technology Park, Asian Hospital City, Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) and Tanza, Naic, Dasmariñas and Bacoor. Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) are also accessible via alternate routes. Festival Technology Park is the first industrial hub South of Manila. Several major industrial estates, such as Gateway Business Park, a world class business community in Mamplasan and the Asian Hospital City (AHC) in Biñan/Laguna. Oriental General Trias Hometowns Inc. is the ideal for this municipality is to achieve an eight-industrial and residential business. It is considered one of the real frontiers of growth and development in the CALABARZON area as attested by the great industrial subdivisions located in the town. The strategic location of the Oriental Garden Residences makes it an ideal residential individuals who wants have an investment in a central location in Cavite as well as foreign investors in the area who are looking for a suitable place to settle. It also ideal for families who can unwind and visit Robinsons Pavilion Trias, Gateway Business Park, Festival Technology Park, Asian Hospital City, Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) and Tanza, Naic, Dasmariñas and Bacoor. Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) are also accessible via alternate routes. Festival Technology Park is the first industrial hub South of Manila. Several major industrial estates, such as Gateway Business Park, a world class business community in Mamplasan and the Asian Hospital City (AHC) in Biñan/Laguna. Oriental General Trias Hometowns Inc. is the ideal for this municipality is to achieve an eight-industrial and residential business. It is considered one of the real frontiers of growth and development in the CALABARZON area as attested by the great industrial subdivisions located in the town. The strategic location of the Oriental Garden Residences makes it an ideal residential individuals who wants have an investment in a central location in Cavite as well as foreign investors in the area who are looking for a suitable place to settle. It also ideal for families who can unwind and visit Robinsons Pavilion Trias, Gateway Business Park, Festival Technology Park, Asian Hospital City, Aguinaldo Highway (Daang Hari and Antipolo-Tagaytay Road) and Tanza, Naic, Dasmariñas and Bacoor.

Aerial's perspective of The Oriental Garden Residences

Everything comes easy with

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Johansson, Reynolds end 2-year-old marriage

LOS ANGELES...Hollywood stars Scarlett Johansson and Ryan Reynolds have called it quits after two years of marriage...they said in a statement on Tuesday. "After long and careful consideration, we've decided to end our marriage. We enjoyed our relationship with love and it's with love and kindness we leave it." Johansson, 26, married Reynolds, 34, in September 2008. —Reuters

DID YOU KNOW...

Mark Wahlberg dedicates his first-ever Best Actor nomination to Manny Pacquiao

KATIE Holmes

Golden Globe nods thrill nominees

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Reuben U. Sequito

BEVERLY HILLS—Mark Wahlberg, who studied boxing champ Manny Pacquiao as part of his training for "The Fighter," and "Black Swan," a film hyped by Filipino-American Mathew Libiran, were among the Golden Globe Awards nominees announced early Tuesday morning at The Beverly Hilton.

The announcements were made by Katie Holmes, Blair Underwood and Josh Duhamel, along with Miss Golden Globe 2011 Gia Mantegna (daughter of actor Joe Mantegna) and Phil Berk, president of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), which owns the awards.

HFPA is composed of journalists representing publications from around the world with a combined readership of 250 million. The nonprofit organization gives over $3 million annually in grants, donations and scholarships from the proceeds it receives from NBC for the right to air the shows.

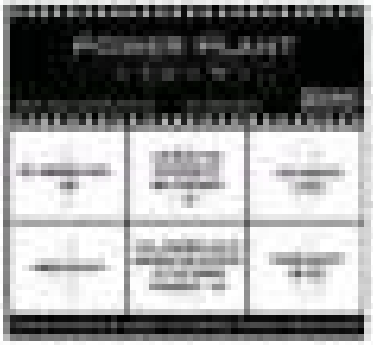
That morning, Filmmaker Darren Aronofsky...Matthew's frequent collaborator and whose "Black Swan" earned four nods, including Best Picture (Drama and Best Director for first nomination)—called from Paris and exclaimed, "I am so happy!"

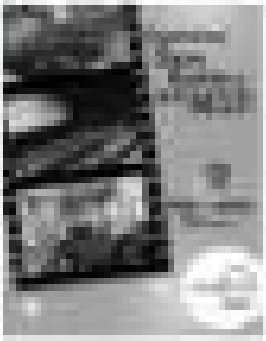
Darren's ballerinas in his dark, psychosexual film, Natalie Portman and Mila Kunis, snagged Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress nominations, respectively.

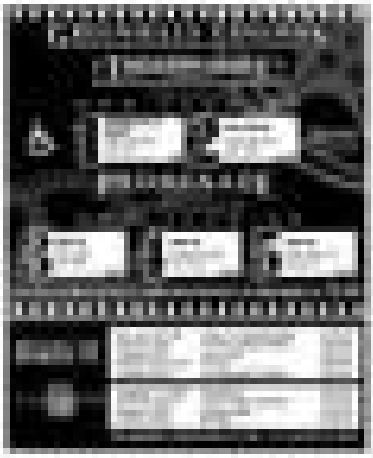
Darren told us how he got the good

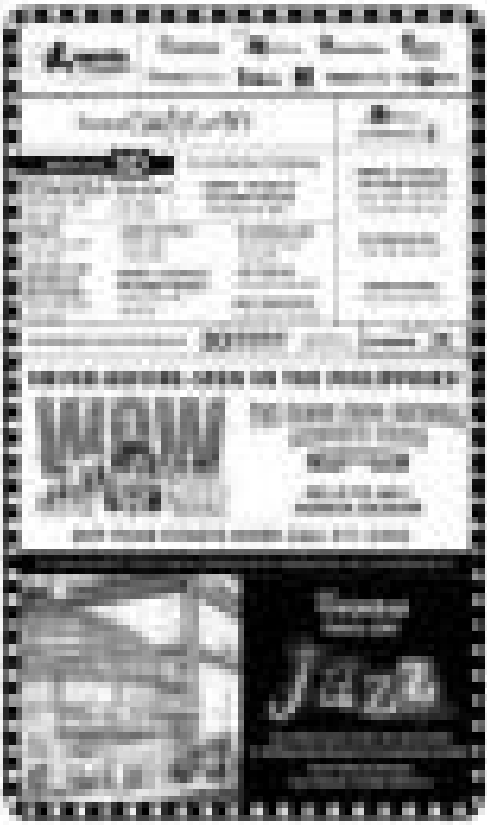
GOLDEN GLOBES p2

BLAIR Underwood







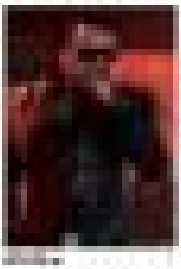


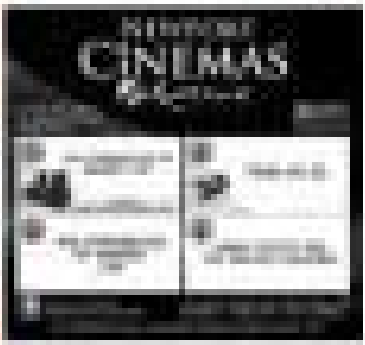
Growing up i...

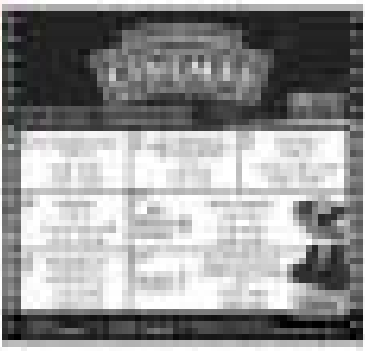
Golden Globe...

front of the camera

Apt.dc ap top-bills 3-night club tour







Katrina: *'Mamatay pa ako'*

By Alice Policarpio
Contributor

THE SAME day that everybody was glued to the TV set for the Supreme Court decision on the controversial Hayden sex-video case involving Hubert Webb, the judiciary of Kentucky, USA convicted and civil case against Hayden Kho wasn't by extremely interested.

In a report aired on GMA-7's "24 Oras" on Tuesday, Judge Rudolfo Bonifacio of Pasig RTC Branch 270 dismissed in a 14-page decision the motion on video case due to insufficient proof that Hubb had no knowledge of the videotaping that took place.

According to the ruling, "It is clear that evidence is sufficient to prove that the sex video was taken without the private complainant's knowledge. On this score alone, it will already be very hard to hold the accused criminally responsible for his act of taking the sex video."

The ruling also stated that Hubb was well aware that Kho possessed a video camera. Citing an earlier imperfection by the court, the decision also said it was impossible for Hubb to see the video camera on a table which was no more than five feet away from their bed.

While Kho celebrates at his new-the decision, Hubb was the picture of soul-crushing defeat. After the hearing, a devastated Hubb faced the media swearing that he didn't know she was being videotaped while having sex with Kho.

"Mawawalay po ko sa mamatay po buong pamilya ko, hindi ko alam. (I swear on my life and my family's—I didn't know)," the sobby actress told "24 Oras."

"Yung pinaghirapan ko naman hindi lang para sa akin, para sa buong kaanakan. Ano 'yun? Masasabi nila' lang 'Ito na ibang kasi, ginusto' (Unbelievable) for long," she added.

Despite that this first round of the fight, Hubb, and her lawyer, Atty. Raymond Fortaleza, vow to press on. They are set to appeal the decision.

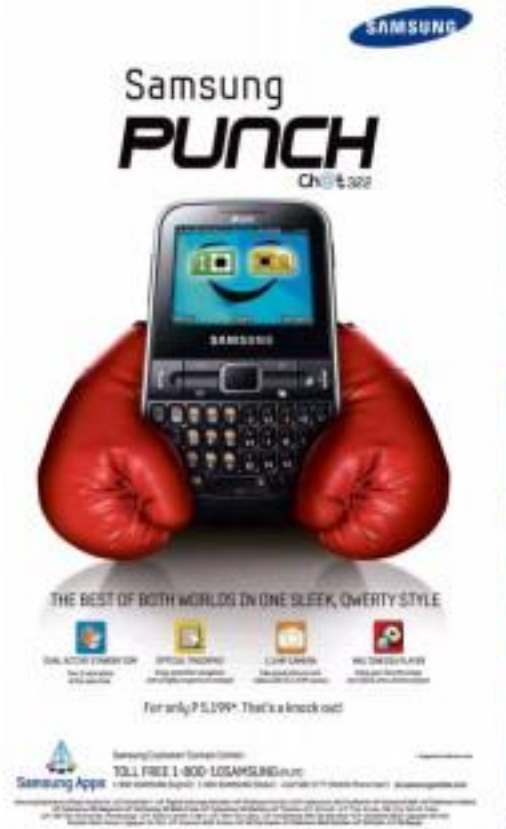
METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

RPG: Metanoia

"We are running the guide to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema trip. The 36th MMFF runs from Dec. 25 to Jan. 7, 2010.)

Directed by Liza Soberano with the voices of Ago Mabilangan, Eugene Domingo, Sharp Navarro, Cogney Jaramillo, Aiko de la Cruz, Aiman Aquino, Ian-ian Jocanan, Kimberly Gamboa, Shanty Mcjames, Igilbert Flores.

Role-rushes that their favorite role-playing game Metanoia has become too realistic for comfort, as a computer virus infects and invades the world. It's up to the young gamers to defeat their vicious online enemy who seeks to conquer not just the mythical Metanoia but planet Earth itself. Graded A by the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB), this film marks a milestone as the country's first 3-D animated full-length feature. It also inspired the hard-earned partnership of Animax Media, Taiwanese Animation and Star Cinema. In spite of the struggles of local animated flicks, director Soxxy thinks "the time is ripe for RPG."



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ENTERTAINMENT Living Stars

THE REVILLAS' two-year-old tree is decorated with red ornaments.

Bong Revilla and Lani Mercado have built a home big enough, and with lots of love, too, for their ever-expanding family

Full, fun house

HOME BODY

NUTCRACKER soldiers are small finds.

SLEIGH sculpture by Orlina

GOLDEN ring from a Chinese friend

By Rayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Jim Gulan Punzalan

REP. LANI Mercado says her husband, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., is just as meticulous as she is with home matters.

After Lani had put the finishing touches on this year's Christmas décor, with the help of interior decorator Angey Tejerina, she still consulted Bong on the finer details.

"I am so precise [in comments and suggestions to the overall design," Lani relates. "He went of the house to look joyful, festive and bright."

"I'm a perfectionist," Bong admits.

PHILS. 88

"I DIDN'T know what to expect. My palms were all sweaty even when (Ivermectin) was cold," says Marvin Agustin of his first time he arrived in Brussels.

Marvin the actor now wants to wear the producer's hat

By Marinell H. Cruz
Photos courtesy of Marvin Agustin

MARVIN says going into film production is a dream come true.

ACTOR Marvin Agustin said he is looking into the possibility of co-producing a film with Belgian director and scriptwriter Fabrice De Walle, whom he met when he attended the recently concluded 57th Brussels International Film Festival (IFF) in Belgium.

"He is coming over to the Philippines soon to start his research," Marvin told Inquirer Entertainment. "This is a dream come true for me. For many years now, I've been considering going into film production (and) haven't found the perfect material yet."

De Walle wrote and directed the thriller "Arsan," which premiered at the Venice International Film Festival in 2006. He also directed the psychological horror film "Calvaire" in 2004.

Marvin sat as jury member of the Brussels IFF last month—the first Filipino actor invited to judge the prestigious film festival. Mark Meily's "Donsol" won the festival's Best Picture award and the film's lead actor, Mary Ji Ventura, bagged the Best Actress honor.

As jury member, Marvin said his job was to pick the winners from seven full-length and 12 short film entries. "It's a list of Mark Meily (He's really good. I bought his film, 'not kasi one vote,' he said. Marvin's film, "Sigaw" (directed by Joel Lamangan), about the prosecution, torture and intrigues during the Marcos regime, was also screened during the week-long event.

"I learned a lot from my experience there. I was impressed with the Brussels IFF's system of choosing the winners. It's very efficient. It just took us a day to deliberate and come up with the list. I'm confident that we came up with a fair decision," Marvin, the jurist, said.

He admitted to being a nervous wreck that first time he arrived in Brussels. "I didn't know what to expect. My palms were all sweaty even when the weather was so cold," he recalled. "When I sat down with the other jurors, I decided to put be honest with them. I told them that I've been acting for 14 years but still know very little about the technical aspect of making movies. They all reassured me by telling me to just enjoy the films."

OVERHEARD

RYAN Sesorsor, on new "American Idol" judges Steven Tyler and Jennifer Lopez: "We all have much other (non-work. It's not like it's the first day on the job." 4/7

RYAN Sesorsor

REESE Witherspoon, on playing opposite co-stars in "How Do You Know?": "Just let me mention "I usually play very verbal characters, but this is a woman who ... doesn't want to talk." 4/7

WISH LIST

Al Al DE LAS ALAS

If I were President, I'd make sure there would be motorcycle lanes on the highways of the country. I've seen too many accidents involving motorcycles on the road. Not everyone can afford cars. And motorcycles can be a fun and practical means of travel if they have their own lanes. Also, I'd master the

BOOTS Anson-Roa

JON Santos

biggest Gay Pride Parade in the world. I'd build it at the Quirino Grandstand, to acknowledge our LGBT (Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender) brothers and sisters during the holidays.

JOSE JAVIER REYES

If I were President, my first Executive Order for Christmas would be to give a 14th month bonus to public school teachers. Also, I'd provide scholarship incentives for students pursuing careers in education. The toughest is as important as the richest in defending the sovereignty of the Republic.

JOSE Javier Reyes

Jon Santos

If I were President, I'd implement Executive Order 1229, which would see to it that all those who are against the Web Convention would be tied to the narrowest exit of a busy mall, 10 runners before closing time on Dec. 24—so they'd be trampled by hundreds and hundreds of last-minute shoppers.

BOOTS ANSON-ROA

If I were President, I'd issue new Executive Orders this Christmas, given the importance of cinema as a purveyor of change and agent of reform. I'd propose that the movies be elevated beyond the category of an entertainment industry and be classified as a creative business. Also, I'd support the establishment of an overall film commission, a super-body that would include all industry stakeholders.

Report: Sun Dingo Ai

Red Carpet

At the 58th Fantas rites

HOT! Rovel Ignacio with special friend Suzuki

LOVE Pau

MATTEO Guidicelli

Hiro Peraginchan

ROMNIE Richards

BARBIE Forteleza

ALLEN Dizon

LANG and Bong at the piano. They have made sure that all their girls took piano lessons.

OLD PIECES were reupholstered and varnished when the family moved in.

Full, fun house

From page K1

While the clan's home in Cavite braved cloudy to a copper-suit-gold motif, the Novellino choice and five-floor Alabang house.

"The house in Cavite is European-inspired while the one in Alabang is modern Asian," Lani notes.

This year, the customary fresh ornamentation all over the Alabang home, pinned a Nativity scene at the foyer, displayed an Infant Jesus figurine welcome at the Last Supper by the stairs and put up a stunning frame Claus by the doorway.

"My own kids didn't grow up with the tradition of Santa Claus," Lani explains. "But we made sure to introduce our grandchildren to it."

The children, Bong and Lani agree, have become more receptive with the arrival of their two grandkids: Lui Jolo's son Gabi, 5, and Inah's daughter Alexis, 2.

They confidently assumed that their own kids have grown up: Bryan, 24, Jolo, 22, Isiah, 21, Gianna, 19, Leandro, 15, and Rian, 12.

"I got surprised," Bong confesses. "Our youngest Rian is already a young man. But now it's as if we have new toys in Gabi and Alexis."

There are times when Bong considers expanding the home, to make room for the new additions in the family.

"But then I realize that when the kids go off to college, Lani and I will be all alone in this big house," Bong says.

LITTLE versions Christmas trees in the sala.

WHITE tradition painting with gold leaf (by Jaime Cruz) is from a gallery on Boston Drive.

PRIZED FINE Holy Family figures.

EIGHT-seater dining table is up and ready for the holidays.

BLUE and white pottery.

For now, they enjoy living in a full, fun house. Kahit nagsisilabasan kami (Even if it gets a bit crowded)," Bong says.

The holidays are inevitably "cherished and chaotic" for the Novellos.

"Always pure magulo (has been noisy)," Lani says.

Although he is temporarily busy promoting a movie for the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) every December, what year he stars in "Sa Ngalan ng Ating Kabanda" (MMFF-winner Jun Lalin's drama "Da Letter), Bong goes to special quality time with his family.

Here the annual MMFF parade on Christmas Eve, the Novellos rush back to Alabang.

"We usually have Noche Buena in our Alabang house. On the 25th, we visit my side of the family," says Lani. "Then on Dec. 31, we go to Mass at the Imus Cathedral and welcome the New Year with fireworks, and more food in our Cavite home."

Lani says Bong requests for homegrown fare for Noche Buena and Media Noche feasts.

"He usually asks for grilled lechon, barbecue, ham and queso de bola," Lani says. "This year, he requested for pata hamonado and sinigang."

They have very simple Christmases, Bong insists.

"When I'm home, I'm happy because I'm with my wife" he exclaims.

"Aray," Lani quips. "He feels content and relaxed here. This is my comfort zone."

"We're always on the go, so when I'm free, I hang out with my kids. Ini-e-email (lunge, stuffing, watching movies, dining out," Bong says.

"We enjoy simple, ordinary stuff. These things keep us grounded and balanced," says Lani.

The holiday season is no exception.

"My kids would usually give me a T-shirt as a gift for Christmas. They'd all sewn up a jacket for me, gift for me. Ambag-ambag sila," Bong says.

"More than material things, I value our time together the most," Lani says. "Preparing dinner together, Laughing, stuffing and shopping together. We do our shopping at the ZBB—usually on the 23rd, all of the holidays ends."

Reunions with Bong's siblings in Cavite are just as gleeful.

"All of Bong's siblings would bring their families to visit my father-in-law [unless one and former senator Ramon Revilla Sr.]," Lani says. "We're one whole homogay there."

The health of his father, who suffered a stroke two years ago, is improving, says Bong.

LANG faced a piece he did not like the photo.

AFRICAN and Asian antiques on a shelf.

THE DEMo Jennine Bong's favorite nook in the Alabang property.

NATIVITY scene is from Bethel's.

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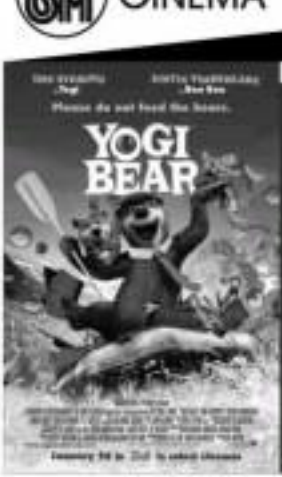

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Full, fun house

from page K1

THE COUPLE prefers simple, homespun fare for Noche Buena.

AMORSOLO painting hangs in the suite.

Whenever Ramon Jr. sees his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren gathered in his Cuerpo home, he won't help shedding tears of joy, Bong recounts.

"My dad is a simple guy. In the past, you'll never see him cry. But now he tells me that whenever he's happy he finds himself misty-eyed," Bong says. "We all get sentimental some Christmastime."

Bong recalls that his late mother Amanda instilled in them the value of generosity at a young age.

"As kids, we spent Christmas day handing our gifts to our neighbors in Cuenca," Bong recalls. "My mom believed that the more you give, the more that you'd be blessed. She would even borrow money so that she could give away gifts to our friends. Blessings would come back to you a hundred-fold, she would constantly tell us."

He says that his mom, a resourceful giving woman, would open her home to everyone—even his dad's children with other women.

According to urban legend, the eldest Borsellia has at least 88 children. "I've met 40 of my half-siblings," Bong says.

Lani says she admires her late mother-in-law's grace and kindness.

Lani herself has no qualms about Bong's bid with another woman. "I look up to my mother-in-law. She accepted all my brothers-in-law's kids. Bakit ang kasalanan ang mga bata. [It's not the kids' fault.]"

Luigi Borsellia, Bong's teenaged son with a non-show biz lady, sometimes stays with them in Alabang. Lani volunteers, "He's my son Ram's godchild. We take him shopping sometimes."

Lani says her home's doors are open to everyone on Christmas day as well.

"We have lots of friends who don't have families of their own. They usually have Noche Buena with us. Marvee Lansang adopted [the character actor] Arnie Reaya. The holiday season reminds us to connect without time," Lani quips.

The rest of the year, Borsellia reunions are traditionally held during Ramon Jr.'s birthday in March and Ramon Jr.'s birthday in September.

Although Bong is a middle child, he often acts as de facto patriarch of the clan.

"It's because I'm the one with a responsible job in government, that I don't let it go to my head," Bong asserts. "I still consult my older siblings. There's still respect for seniors. That's what my parents taught us."

Family unity was another important lesson, Bong says.

"We always help each other out," Bong points out. "Whenever I have a new movie, all my siblings pitch in. Sisweta handles booking; Marlen, production; Andrea, promotion. We each have our own expertise."

After the hectic holidays, the Borsellias usually hole up in their home, for a little R 'n' R.

"We hibernate," Lani jokes.

Favorite books for Bong and Lani are fiction and garden in their suburban home.

Bong relishes the airy open space.

"The kids have pool parties here," Lani says.

"We hang out here, listening to the birds and the sound of the mini-waterfalls by the pool," Bong says.

Rush moments of serenity are precious for the Borsellias.

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CLOCKWISE from left: Glorietta activity center transforms into fantasy world; Bayo Dance Project performs "Pinoy Christmas"; meet-and-greet Santa in Trinoma; Imagine Nation photo montage

Great endings, beautiful beginnings

CHRISTMAS trees decor at Ayala Center Cebu, shared centers at Market! Market! and trees galore in Greenbelt

By Kian Katigbak

THE FESTIVE season ushers in not just festivities and merrymaking, but also a time for creating new beginnings for oneself, the family and community.

Develop better habits. Experiment with different looks. Delve into new passions. Eliminate clutter—physical and otherwise. Enable positive transformation. Be rejuvenated. Indulge and be inspired.

The Ayala Malls invite you to imagine all these possibilities.

Creative ideas plus unique experiences abound at Glorietta and Greenbelt in Makati; Alabang Town Center, Ayala Center Cebu, Market! Market! and Bonifacio High Street in Bonifacio Global City; Trinoma in Quezon City; and Marquee Mall in Pampanga.

The décor, which was inspired by the tale of "The Nutcracker," create whimsical worlds for each of the Ayala Malls.

Festive productions, such as a fireworks program, storytelling, ballet, and artist and choir performances delight the young and young at heart.

Whimsy-filled figures in a wide selection of shocking ribbons for Trinoma, white sweets and baked goodies—accompanied by fresh brews—make for perfect snacks or meal enders.

Merchandise that benefits habitat for the nearly Children's Hour and Cecilia completes the round-up of gift suggestions. Donation boxes are also available for clothes and toys you wish to share with the less fortunate.

Workshops not only get creative juices flowing, but also give families and friends quality time with each other.

There are themed booths, Santa meet-and-greet stations and a whole lot more.

Turn these pages to discover how the Ayala Malls can make your holidays sparkle, while helping you make a fresh start in the year ahead.

Imagine the magical things we can do together.
Let the festivities begin!

THE NUTCRACKER BALLET
A magical show about fairies, mice and sugar plum treats.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT
Stars and songs kick-off this season's festivities.

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT
What's the best way to spark some Christmas cheer? Fireworks!

CHRISTMAS CHEER STATION
Your creative side is calling! This arts and crafts workshop will bring you joy!

IMAGINE NATION
Share your dreams for the world with others. Join other hopefuls on our Imagine Nation Expression Board.

Glorietta · Greenbelt · Alabang Town Center · Ayala Center Cebu · Market! Market! · Trinoma · Marquee

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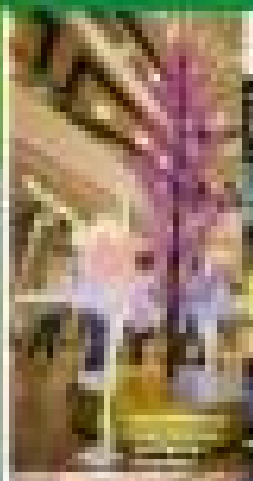
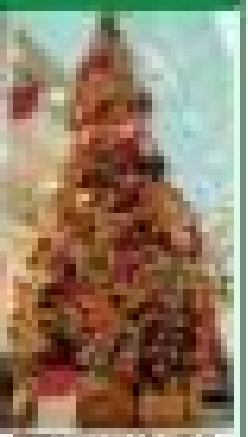
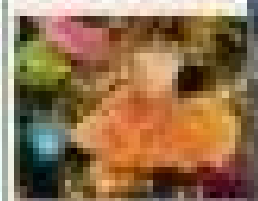
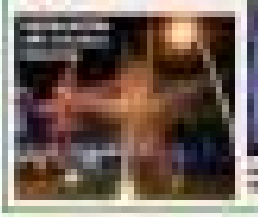
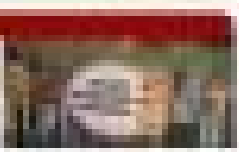
A season of choices











The moves and music of Christmas

"GRAND Waltz of the Flowers"

Spanish dance chocolate

"THE GRAND pas de deux between the Sugarplum Fairy and her prince

By Sasha-Lee Uy

PHOTOS TOGETHER represent how a favorite ballet with distinctive Filipino yuletide overtones, the Ayala Malls creates the breathtaking "A Christmas Ballet Concert." Featuring scenes from "The Nutcracker" and "Pinoy Christmas," the show is staged every weekend until Dec. 19 in different Ayala Malls at 2 p.m. and again at 5 p.m.

The program opens with a retelling of E.T.A. Hoffmann's "The Nutcracker," presenting a background similar to Korea on Monday with Clara's adventure with the Nutcracker Prince and her epic battle against the dreadful Mouse King.

The first half of the show features "Pinoy Christmas," choreographed by James Lahoreau. Through song and dance, "Pinoy Christmas" vividly captures the uniqueness of Filipino Christmas traditions, peppered by various foreign and local influences. Apart from depicting the Misa de Gallo, Simbang

HIBLOTONG or Christmas candy canes

ANABAN coffee

CHINESE tea

RUSSIAN tea vodka

Suite and Nacho Duato's modern, complete with guitar and all, "Pinoy Christmas" also emphasizes the love and values that Pinoys espouse especially in this season of giving.

Akira Ryan Isayama's award-winning "Pieces I" and "Pieces II" arrangements playing in the background, plus vibrant costumes—simple batayog for males and a dance-friendly version of the Maria Clara for females—are more to yet.

Jeffrey Evanlo, former guest ballet master of Ballet Philippines and principal dancer at Ballet Manila, selected "The Nutcracker" Act II's "The Land of the Sweets" to perform for the concert. It begins with a plum-laced display of "Grand Waltz of the Roses," where the Sugar plum Fairy is introduced with her recently trained

"THE GRAND pas de deux between the Sugarplum Fairy and her prince

figured prince. To celebrate Clara's courage for saving the prince, sweets from all over the world clad in jaw-dazzling costumes—Russian ice cream, Chinese tea, Spanish hot chocolate, Arabian coffee and candy canes.

The show finishes with the Sugar plum Fairy's famous pas de deux with her adorable prince.

"A Christmas Ballet Concert" gives a uniquely Filipino twist to an otherwise worldwide favorite. The show is about an hour long, with an extra half hour for intermission. It is performed by scholars of Steps Dance Project, most of them teenagers 14-18 years old.

What happens when a little girl, with a big imaginative flair, falls asleep under a Christmas tree?...

The Nutcracker Ballet

A MAGICAL SHOW ABOUT FAIRIES, MICE AND SUGAR PLUM TREATS.

STORY TIME!

A CHRISTMAS CONCERT
FEATURING "PINOY CHRISTMAS" AND EXCERPTS FROM THE NUTCRACKER

SUGAR PLUM FAIRY'S KINGDOM OF SWEETS

MARQUEE